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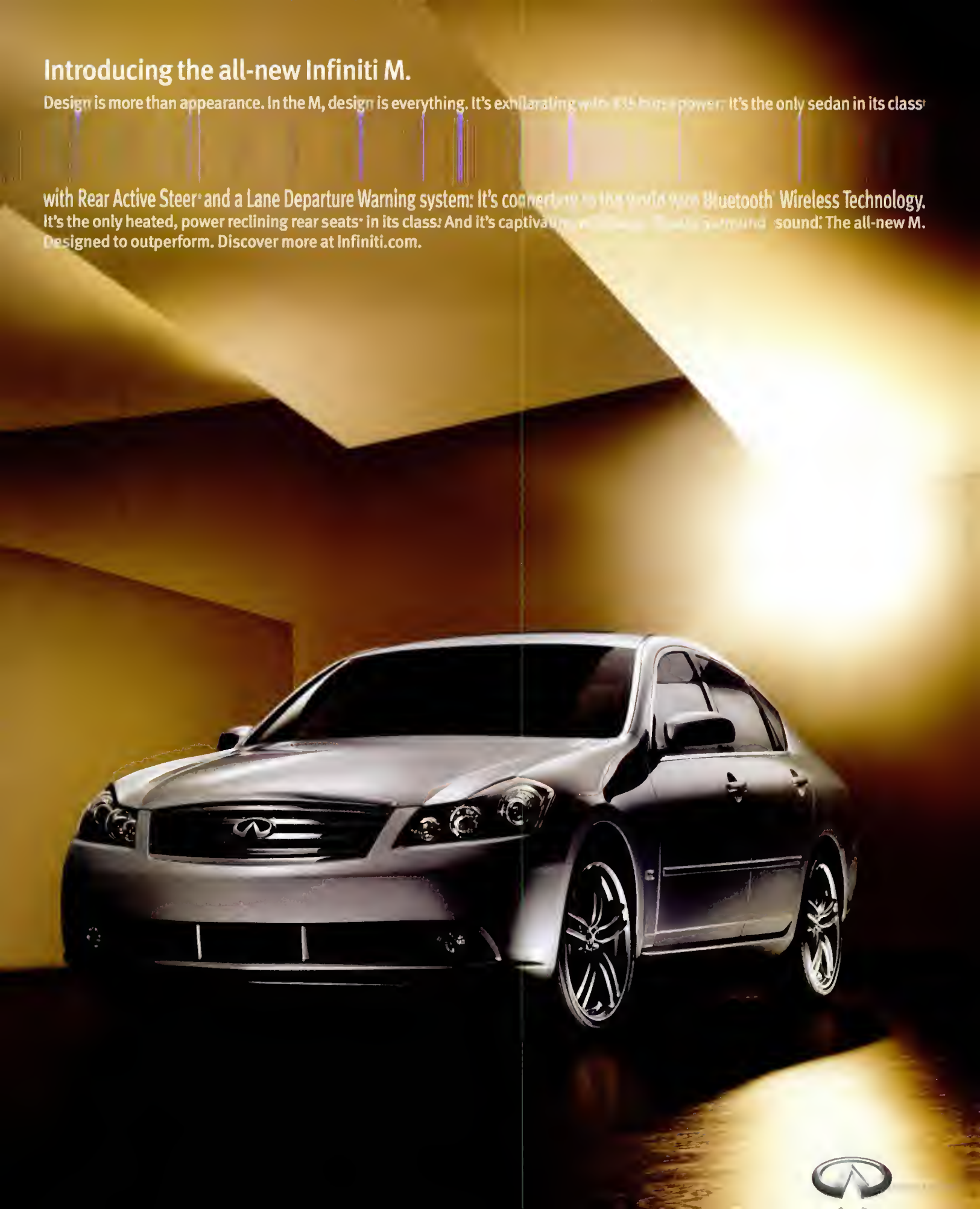
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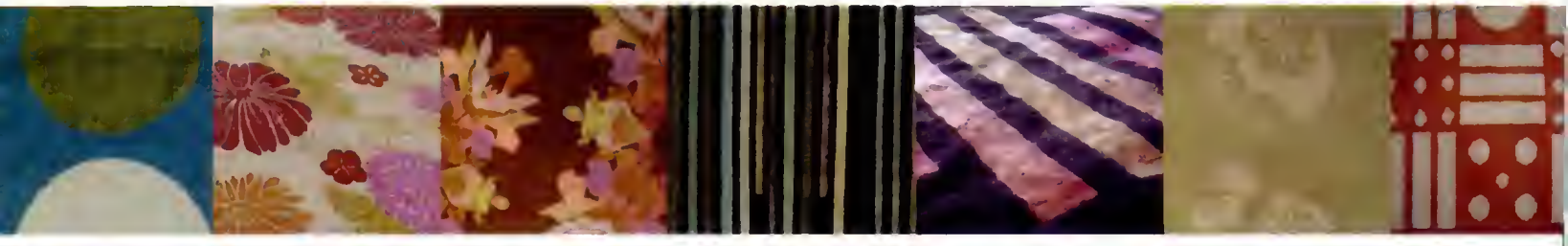

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BANANA REPUBLIC

Oct/Nov 2005 Contents:
Modern Across America

Dwellings

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Cover: Gracia Residence, Tijuana, Mexico, page 186
Photo by Gregg Segal

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Hanson Residence

Szujewska Residence

I am writing in response to Josh Hanson's letter ("Letters," June 2005) about his spherical house in Minnesota (top photo), and to tell you about my own recent remodel of a geodesic dome home (bottom photo). Six years ago, my husband and I purchased a geodesic dome atop Sonoma Mountain outside Petaluma, California. Neither of us had been inside a dome before, but we were taken with the house's ridgetop setting and its 360-degree views. We did some research and discovered that the dome—or "Bucky Ball," as it is nicknamed—was the first prefab kit home designed for easy owner assembly and energy efficiency.

We also learned that the dome's creator, Buckminster Fuller, was a frequent lecturer at nearby Sonoma State University, where his presence inspired the construction of roughly 200 domes in the area. We began spotting domes everywhere.

We were inspired both by Dwell's embrace of house design built on integrity and ideas, and its philosophy that it's okay to be different. We started to think about how we could bring a modern sensibility to the dome, one that would mesh with its playful, iconoclastic nature. I began to sketch out reconfigurations of the dome's unique living and sleeping spaces in ways that—to address Mr. Hanson's question—would improve livability while allowing the house's original form and function to shine. We invited design and architect friends to contribute ideas, but found that many of them were thrown by the dome's lack of straight walls and ninety-degree angles.

We spent a lot of time "listening" to the house. The space had an openness and at the same time a cloistered presence. Although a dome has a circular footprint, its geodesic structure, from which it derives its strength, makes the triangle a prominent design element. The house's many angles made designing and furnishing the space a lot like solving a jigsaw puzzle.

Laurie Szujewska
Penngrove, California

Josh Hanson's home presents some unusual challenges. Successful architecture balances the elements of design, composition, and nature. It's important to create changes that are in harmony with the existing structure; let the sphere be the dominant impression. Build shapes inside and next to it that will enhance it, not compete with it. The dome's round form has established Hanson's design vocabulary; he should carefully introduce contrasting shapes to bring balance to the house. For example, the rectangular windows contrast with the round building in shape and scale. Existing shapes and forms should be repeated, and he should use transition in scale and the other elements of composition to unify the result. Home design is revealed to the viewer in three dimensions; we must learn to recognize the elements that form a composition so that we can be aware of how we manipulate them.

Trish Reynoso
Santa Barbara, California

The article you published on the digital frontier ("Unreal Estate: Building a Dream Home on the Digital Frontier,") in the September 2005 issue was a pleasant diversion from your usual subjects. It had even more relevance for me because I am currently reading Phaidon's 10 x 10, where I'm finding architecture's future displayed in non-orthogonal forms on nearly every page. Saarinen certainly foresaw this future when he gave us the TWA terminal 60 years ago.

All of this plays perfectly into your hand to promote manufactured housing. As digitally designed architecture takes hold, which is a near certainty, the public will turn to it just as they turned from boxy automobile shapes to current models. Today's tract house and McMansion builders will be unable to compete—not the most talented mechanic could construct a modern car in a neighborhood garage. By mid-century most residential housing will be digitally designed and factory produced. Your dream will come true and we shall all be rewarded.

Galen Cook
Sierra Vista, Arizona

I read your June cover article ("Love's Labors Found") with great interest. Unfortunately, I cannot agree with your assessment that the house featured in the story is a "great success." Although your article is well written and interesting, I bring a unique perspective to this opinion—I am the original client and co-builder. I feel that you missed an opportunity to chronicle the disconnect between architect and client that ultimately forced my partner, Patrick McCue, and myself to abandon our dream home after three long years of continuous labor. Because Dwell is a resource for "modern living," I believe your readership would be interested in knowing the truth about our ordeal.

At the beginning of the design process, our architect, Marwan Al Sayeed, assured us he could produce a modern minimalist house for our fixed budget of $283,000. Marwan told us that with his innovative design we would be able to get building materials donated. He also assured us that our resources for salvaged materials coupled with Patrick's ironworking skills would get us more house for our budget. We believed that by acting as general contractors, and by bringing our sweat equity to the construction, we could achieve our goal of an exciting and beautiful home within the confines of our budget. We threw ourselves into the project, totally caught up in Marwan's vision, but despite all our efforts and some $800,000 in actual receipts, we ended up with a home that was uninhabitable, due mainly to an uninsulated and leaky roof.

It is extremely sad to me that, despite our total commitment and hard work, we were forced to walk away from our dream home with nothing to show for our labor, not even our name attached to the project. From its initial inclusion in the prestigious Design Triennial in New York City, to its two appearances in your magazine and its continued publication in other periodicals and books, it seems our heralded McCue residence—the House of Earth and Light—lives a charmed existence that doesn't require objective critical assessment.

It should bother Dwell's readership that we, the clients, have somehow become secondary to the artistic success of a project. I believe most people would agree that a house should provide shelter from the elements. On this most basic level, Marwan Al Sayeed's design failed us, his clients. I am left wondering this: when should we lose sight of the importance of architecture's responsibility of serving the client?

Marika McCue
Phoenix, Arizona

I would like to thank you for the story on the house in Hawaii in your July/August issue ("Go With the Flow"). I have to say it is one of the most inspiring homes I've seen in Dwell. The ▸

PHOTO BY SCOTT HESS (BROWN DOME HOUSE)


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Hey good lookin'—whatcha got cookin'?

In anticipation of our annual special feature on kitchens, we've decided to reach out to the heart of Dwell, our readers, to find exemplary hearts of the home—your kitchens. If you feel your kitchen is not only an outpost of culinary wonder but also an inspired design, we'd like to see it.

Please send no more than three photographs (amateur is not only fine, it's expected) and a brief description (not to exceed 350 words) of your kitchen to kitchens@dwellmag.com. The winning submissions will have their kitchens professionally photographed and published in the pages of Dwell next spring.* We already know our readers are especially design savvy, and we look forward to seeing what's cooking in your kitchen! Submission deadline: November 15, 2005

*You may or may not have to invite one or more of the Dwell staff over for a meal, but just in case, we like bacon cheeseburgers.

simplicity of the floor plan is a constant reminder to me of how much easier we can live. I am an avid believer that we can do much more in our lives with much less.

My one complaint with the design, which was touched on in your story, is how potentially harmful the surroundings are to Zane, the occupants' child. I don't think opportunities for high falls, sharp rocks, and volcanic eruption are very suitable for children. Although the design process started before Zane's birth, I would have hoped the architect would have changed his tune in order to consider these things.

This isn't the first time I have seen a modern home that held the importance of its aesthetic quality and surroundings higher than the importance of a safe, child-friendly environment.

Jakob Clark
Jackson, Mississippi

Architect Craig Steely Responds:
We live in a culture where personal safety is bounded on one side by litigation and a false sense of security on the other. The safest boundary is common sense—my wife and I live by it and teach our son to do the same. Awareness is inspiring and frightening.

I panicked when I saw the cover line "Mix It Up/ The 5 Best Blenders" ("Smooth Operators," July/ August 2005). I had just presented my husband with a brushed-chrome Waring Pro for Father's Day (he's a margarita lover, and I wanted to inspire him to expand his repertoire). I rushed to page 77, fully prepared to be mortified. Imagine my relief to see the Waring listed as number one!

Myra J. Pasek
Mill Valley, California

I wanted to thank you for your article on blenders My wife and I have always had a difficult time finding a worthy one. We appreciate the four that were covered in your July/August 2005 issue and are anxiously awaiting the review of the fifth blender, as indicated by the cover text. Otherwise, your readers deserve an explanation.

R.S. Magnuson
Houston, Texas

Editors' Note: *Our mistake. As stated in our September issue ("Corrections"), the fifth review (of an Oster blender) was written but not printed. If you would like to see the fifth review, please write to andrew@dwellmag.com and it will be delivered promptly!*

I am a 19-year-old architecture student writing to inquire about some of the more administrative aspects of the projects featured in "Liquid Assets" (July/August 2005). I am curious to know whether one would need a permit to just leave an unpowered vessel somewhere? Is it possible to live rent-free aboard such a ship? How was the powerless vessel moved? And more important, at what price?

Philip Haywood
Indianapolis, Indiana

Editors' Note: *For answers to your questions, your best bet is to contact the architects directly. In this case, try Olle@lundbergdesign.com.*

I have been a subscriber to your magazine now for two years. I love it, but that doesn't mean that I think you're perfect. My issue: You're starting to waiver on the "Fruit Bowl Manifesto," which is a mistake. I have seen various collections of fruit ▸

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We often miss our colleagues all the way on the other side of the country so it's always nice to see their smiling faces. We thought you might like to as well—particularly on our five year anniversary. Enjoying the sunshine in Bryant Park, from left to right, are sales assistant, Joanne Luciano; Modern Market manager, Tracey Lasko; director of home furnishings, W. Keven Weeks; New York editor, Shonquis Moreno; regional manager, Kathryn McKeever; and Modern Market director, Lauren Dismuke.

1/ Perry Nelson, 2/ Laura MacArthur, 3/ Aya Brackett, 4/ Kate Stone, 5/ Ann Wilson, 6/ Kyle Blue, 7/ Sam Grawe, 8/ Craig Bromley, 9/ Shelley Tatum Kieran, 10/ Romi Jacques, 11/ Amara Holstein, 12/ Celine Bleu, 13/ Joy Pascual, 14/ Bill Lyons, 15/ Allison Arieff, 16/ Claudia Bruno, 17/ Lara Hedberg Deam, 18/ Michela O'Connor Abrams, 19/ Wally, 20/ Amber Bravo, 21/ Andrew Wagner, 22/ Brian Karo, 23/ Nicole Cassani

in the pages of Dwell lately. Nip that in the bud. And speaking of buds, I strongly urge you to add a companion "Orchid Manifesto" to the Dwell web site. Orchids are beautiful and exotic and boring.

Finally, an idea. I've been struggling to add plants to my home. I enjoy their form, color, and the positive impact they have on my indoor environment. What confuses me to no end and frustrates me completely is the utter lack of interesting and original houseplants available today. I've noticed that not many of the editorial pictures in design magazines have plants in them. Are houseplants old-fashioned and out of place in a modern home? If there is a place for houseplants in the modern home, how do we go beyond the fern and the ficus? Surely I'm not alone in my desire for a home that's green in both construction and aesthetic. What do you think? Can you shine your big modernist flashlight on the indoor-plant hinterlands? Please—let's make houseplants cool.

Jim Powers
Los Angeles, California

Editors' Note: *You've inspired us! We will be doing a "Dwell Labs" on this very subject in an upcoming issue.* ▸

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Letters

Has Dwell magazine ever considered doing a feature story on the neighborhood just south of Washington, DC, in Alexandria, Virginia: Hollin Hills? It was developed starting about 1950 with all the houses designed by the architect Charles Goodman. The whole neighborhood is now vying for historic status. It is a gem of what a modern neighborhood can be. We just moved there and it is fabulous. If you're interested, check out the civic association's page: http://www.hollinhills.org/index.php

Noelle McAfee
Washinton, DC

Editors' Note: Please see our story on page 204.

Just wanted you to know how impressed I am with your magazine. My subscription was a gift from an ex-boyfriend. Not surprisingly, your magazine was the only good thing that came out of the relationship.

Elle Lowe
Santa Fe, New Mexico

I just moved into my first home, an 800-square-foot condominium in San Francisco. I pored over Dwell magazines and worked with a friend who has an interior-design background to create my own "Dwell home." Within six weeks, I furnished and set up a home on a fixed budget (I am particularly proud of the homemade wall art, strategically placed to cover unsightly air vents and breaker panels). Before I moved in, I had furniture from Wal-Mart and Office Depot. Four weeks of research and two weeks of shopping later, and I'm now set with everything from a dining table to window treatments. Thanks, Dwell.

Kenneth Leung
San Francisco, California

Corrections for July/Aug 05: In "Cinematic Retreat," we mistakenly noted that the featured Eames chairs with wooden dowel bases are available through Herman Miller. However, the chair/base combination shown is only sold in Europe and Asia through Vitra (www.vitra.com).

In "Off the Beaten Path," we neglected to mention that the David Salmela–designed home was built by Madeline Island–based builders North Woods Construction. We regret the errors.

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Contributors

Dominic Ali ("Taking it to The Trees," pg. 96) is the Vancouver-based author of *Media Madness: An Insider's Guide to Media*. He profiled the "stealth cabin" featured in this month's "Off the Grid" section. "It was the complete opposite of the monster cottages that litter the landscape," he says. "I think both Mies and Zelig would have approved."

Peter Belanger ("Salut!" pg. 100) enjoyed shooting wineglasses this issue. Once he's finished remodeling his house, he plans to use his newfound knowledge to help him find the best glasses to celebrate with.

Deborah Bishop ("Just Add (a Little) Water," pg. 172) is a San Franciscso–based writer and contributing editor to this magazine. Her near-lifelong appreciation for dry martinis and parched wit now extends to gardens that don't guzzle beyond their means, and she hereby resolves to remedy the erratic outpourings of her own automatic drip system.

Andrew Blum ("The Remote Home," pg. 240) is a contributing editor at *Metropolis* and a writer for *Business Week*'s Innovation + Design website. Writing the "Home Technology 101" story this month was sweet justification for far too many hours spent reading gadget blogs. He lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Todd Hido ("Partners in Design," pg. 148) is a Bay Area–based photographer whose work has been featured in *Artforum*, the *New York Times Magazine*, *DoubleTake*, and *Vanity Fair*. His latest book focuses on portraits, so he was well prepared to shoot Lu Wendel and Maynard Hale Lyndon at their house in The Sea Ranch for this issue.

William Lamb ("Better Homes, Technically," pg. 228) is a staff writer for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. Talking to people about inventions they'd like to see reminded him that he is still waiting for someone to invent a pre-set time machine to ferry people to the greatest year in the history of human civilization: 1972.

Dave Lauridsen ("Alaska: The Final (Architectural) Frontier," pg. 196) is a photographer based in Los Angeles. He traveled to Alaska to shoot for this issue of Dwell. He knew he wouldn't be getting much sleep while he was there since the sun doesn't start to set until 11:30 p.m. and it never gets totally dark.

James Nestor ("Alaska: The Final (Architectural) Frontier," pg. 196) is a writer living in San Francisco. While researching the story, Nestor discovered, much to his confusion, that no restaurants in Alaska serve the delicious dessert Baked Alaska.

Grant Scott ("Home Is Where the Design Is," pg. 214) is a photographer based in London. He traveled on his own around the world to photograph his personal design heroes in their homes, creating an intimate portrait of the men and women who shape our everyday environments. "Miles Davis seemed to be playing everywhere I went," Scott says. "He must be the designers' jazzman of choice." The portraits shown in this issue are excerpted from Scott's new book, *At Home with the Makers of Style*, published by Thames and Hudson.

Gregg Segal ("Transforming Tijuana," pg. 186) is a Los Angeles–based photographer who had never been on assignment to shoot in Tijuana before this issue. "Shooting there exposed me to a side of the border town I didn't know existed; a burgeoning middle class," he says. "I suppose this might be one of the very few bright spots of NAFTA," he continues. "Maybe this piece will challenge the stereotypes of Tijuana."

Juliana Sohn ("Suburban Flight," pg. 87) has shot interiors, gardens, and portraiture for a variety of magazines, but her trip to Dayton, Ohio, was the most jinxed she's ever taken. When the airline lost her main camera bag, she tried to shoot with the camera she carried on, but it started to thunder and pour down rain. "The house got hit twice [by lightning] while we took shelter inside," Sohn remembers, adding, "It's nice to be back safe and sound in New York."

Zoe Voigt ("Moving Matsumoto," pg. 158) is a North Carolina–based writer who lives in a house that was featured in *American Home* magazine in 1954, the same year George Matsumoto designed the Poland house. Living in a home from the same era gave her an enhanced perspective on the elegance of Matsumoto's designs.

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Nothing Ventured, Nothing Gained

I am so excited to be writing this letter on the occasion of Dwell's fifth anniversary. I must confess, though, that it's been a somewhat daunting task to approach this particular page this month. What was the best way, I wondered, to acknowledge such an important milestone without resorting to a self-congratulatory recounting of the magazine's accomplishments over the last five years, an effort that could veer quickly into self-aggrandizement. I thought about writing in rhyming stanzas...until I read Shoshana Berger's clever ode to never growing up in her latest *Readymade* editor's note. I even considered borrowing from that categorically non-literary genre, the end-of-year Christmas letter ("...and Timmy graduated from dental school, and our lovely daughter Jean married her high school sweetheart, Kip"). When I reached this sorry point, I put down the pen (or rather, closed the Word document), and did what any enterprising yet blocked writer would do—procrastinate by searching the Internet.

Well, it took only seconds on Google to learn that people commemorate fifth anniversaries with gifts of...wood. Admittedly, wood lacks the gleam of gold (50th anniversary) and the allure of diamonds (60th)—but we've got all that jewelry to look forward to in decades to come. And wood, as it happens, provides me with the perfect jumping-off point from which to share some exciting news.

It's been just over two years since Dwell launched the Dwell Home Design Invitational, an international competition to design an innovative and affordable prefab home that ignores the less than illustrious prefab precedents and embraces instead all the many benefits that prefabricated construction has to offer. The winning entry by Resolution: 4 Architecture was built in North Carolina in 2004, and unveiled at an open house that drew more than 2,500 visitors.

The intent of the Dwell invitational was never to build a single home, but to produce many, and in the process affect the way homes everywhere are designed and built. The overwhelmingly enthusiastic response to Res: 4's design—which the *Washington Post* described as "arguably the most high-profile modern prefab house in America"—convinced us that devoting our energy to making this home available to the public would be well worth it.

It wasn't easy. Long-standing assumptions die hard, and we were facing many that were deeply held. Not only is the manufactured-housing industry stigmatized, modern architecture is, too. Combatting everything from a persistent belief in inevitably shoddy construction to the (mis) perception that modern homes have no resale value—or even a market, for that matter—was no easy feat.

But last fall, while attending the Automated Builders Consortium Convention in Philadelphia, Joseph Tanney of Res: 4 and I had the good fortune to meet Patrick Gilrane, chairman of Empyrean LLC (formerly Deck House), a firm specializing in architecture, planning and component fabrication. Gilrane and Empyrean president Michael Harris saw in the Dwell Home not the obstacles but the possibilities, and so began the process of figuring this all out.

Less than a year later, we are pleased to offer to the public, in partnership with Empyrean, not one but three beautifully designed, highly functional, and eminently livable modern prefab homes (shown on the next three pages). Resolution: 4 Architecture has adapted their winning Dwell Home design; Charlie Lazor of Lazor Office has created a unique twist on his brilliant FlatPak system; and Empyrean's own Joel Turkel has contributed Next House, an inspiring new design, to round out the group. (Oh, and that's where the wood comes in—you can choose from mahogany, cedar, or Douglas fir for your Dwell Home.)

The Dwell Design Invitational was inspired by *Arts & Architecture*'s groundbreaking Case Study Program, the impetus of which was to reinvent the house as a way to redefine living. This is a concept that both Dwell and Empyrean couldn't take more to heart, and we feel that these homes are a move in that direction.

Dwell itself has, over the last five years, sought to redefine living, to look at modernism not merely as an adjective or trend but as a belief system, a way of thinking about the world. In the years to come, we'll be increasingly focused on the things that matter to you (and to us), like integrating green/sustainable practices into architecture and enhancing the ways design can improve our daily lives.

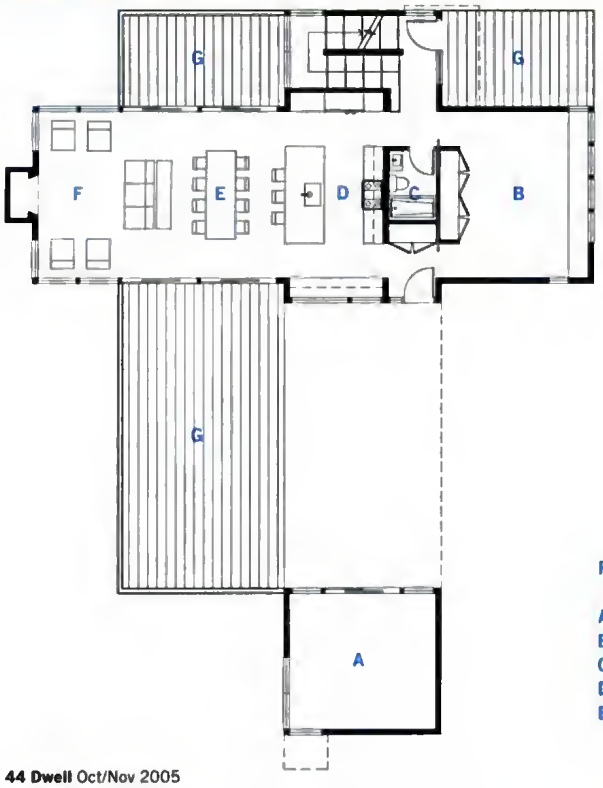
Since 2000, we have achieved many goals and passed many milestones—from steady increases in circulation (from 50,000 to a quarter of a million) to winning the 2005 National Magazine Award for General Excellence last spring. But none are as important as our growing readership and the community that has been created from it. We encourage your continued correspondence and dialogue. It really inspires what we do every day. ▸

ALLISON ARIEFF, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
allison@dwellmag.com

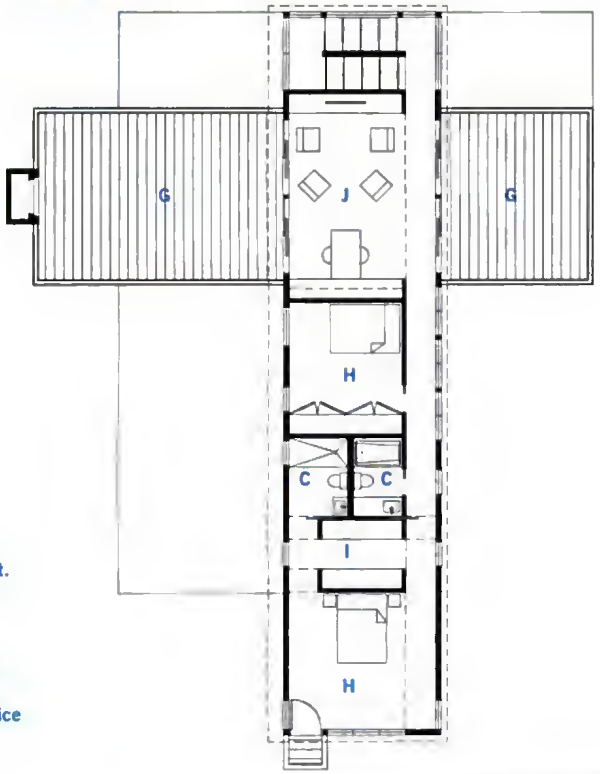
Resolution: 4 Architecture

Resolution: 4 Architecture's winning design for the Dwell Home Design Invitational is now available to the public.

Ground Floor



Upper Floor



Res: 4 Floor Plan / 2,550 sq. ft.

A Studio	F Living
B Guest/Study	G Deck
C Bathroom	H Bedroom
D Kitchen	I Closet
E Dining	J Media/Office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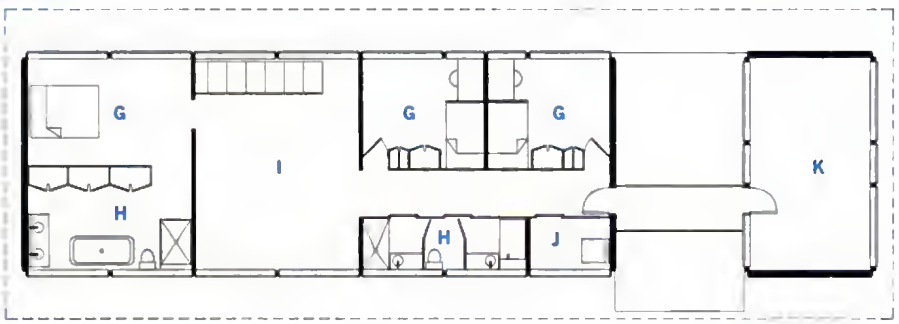
FlatPak

When Charlie Lazor of Lazor Office couldn't find a modern affordable home for his family, he was inspired to design and build his own. His FlatPak house is the result.

Ground Floor

Upper Floor



FlatPak Floor Plan / 3,044 sq. ft.

A Living Room
B Kitchen
C Dining
D Bathroom
E Study
F Deck
G Bedroom
H Bathroom
I Family Room
J Laundry
K Guest Room

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Next House

This light-filled, open-plan home with modified butterfly roof was designed by Emeryville architect Joel Turkel.

Ground Floor

Upper Floor

Deck House Floor Plan / 2,526 sq. ft.

A Deck	F Lavatory	K Closet
B Vestibule	G Storage	L Bedroom
C Dining	H Mud/Laundry	M Open to Below
D Kitchen	I Family Room	
E Living	J Bathroom	

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5

Five years ago, in our very first issue, I wrote about how I came to love modern design. I recounted wearily sitting in a darkened, overheated classroom watching slide after slide of Victorian houses. Then a slide of Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House flashed on the screen. From that moment on, I was convinced of the importance of design that spoke to our time and was inspired to support it.

I built my own home, and while doing so realized that a magazine that embodied the modern aesthetic and provided a vocabulary for design expression would have been a tremendous help. A business plan ensued, people were hired, and we all set about our mission: to create a magazine that showcased modern architecture and design in an intelligent yet accessible way, a magazine for everyone eager to embrace the modern world.

We have all worked hard since then to make sure that the magazine and the brand flourish and that we stay true to our mission. I am happy to say that we've managed to achieve these goals, and I am grateful to everyone on the Dwell staff (see photos on pages 34 and 52) who has helped make it happen. I am also grateful to the readers and advertisers who have supported us with such dedication.

Dwell has grown over the last five years, and so too has the public's interest in design. When we launched in 2000, people interested in design seemed like a small, exclusive group. When talking about the magazine, we'd mostly hear questions like "What is modern?" or "Isn't modern just a trend?" To us, this seemed strange, as we have always believed that good design is an elevating and integral part of any culture. Because of this, we've strived to chronicle people's growing desire and willingness to embrace design that celebrates this age.

Today we're not asked those questions quite as often. Now, so many people are excited about modern design for many different reasons, among them its beauty, its culture, and its optimism. Dwell has shared in and continues to contribute to the increasing interest in the subject; our circulation growth—from 50,000 in 2000 to a quarter of a million today—attests to this, and we're honored to be recognized as having a role in this design evolution.

We imagine that the passion for modern design will continue to grow and flourish. And since we are part of this modern-design movement, it's our responsibility to ensure it retains characteristics essential to it, like innovation and integrity. We want this period to be remembered as a time in history when design was explored through inspired, client-centric, idea-based methods, and where those methods were manifest in beautiful, humane, and engaging work. We hope to represent these ideals in our magazine.

Over Dwell's next five years, we will be launching products, conferences, and events to further inform and inspire our audience. Dwell will also show up in your mailbox more often: nine times in 2006, ten in 2007. And to do all this, we will need to remain as innovative as the people, projects, and products we cover. We will take direction from the work that inspires us. Openness, collaboration, and authenticity are concepts we hope to represent in our pages, as well as qualities that we aspire to embody in ourselves.

One of the crucial tenets of modern design is its willingness to embrace change and we are firm believers in the old adage that the only constant is change. While we accept the reality of a world in flux, we also know that we can choose to engage, dream, and help shape this change. We imagine a more beautiful and just future—and we hope to support this future as fully as we can. ■

LARA HEDBERG DEAM, OWNER & FOUNDER
lara@dwellmag.com

Photo by Douglas Adesko

The Dwell Staff

In October of 2000, a five year anniversary seemed like a long way off. But here we are, bigger and better in 2005. Despite continuing difficulties fielding a complete team for our Dwell Draginz softball games, we were miraculously able to get most of our San Francisco staff in one place for the five year celebration shoot. (NYC staff and a key to names can be found on page 34.)

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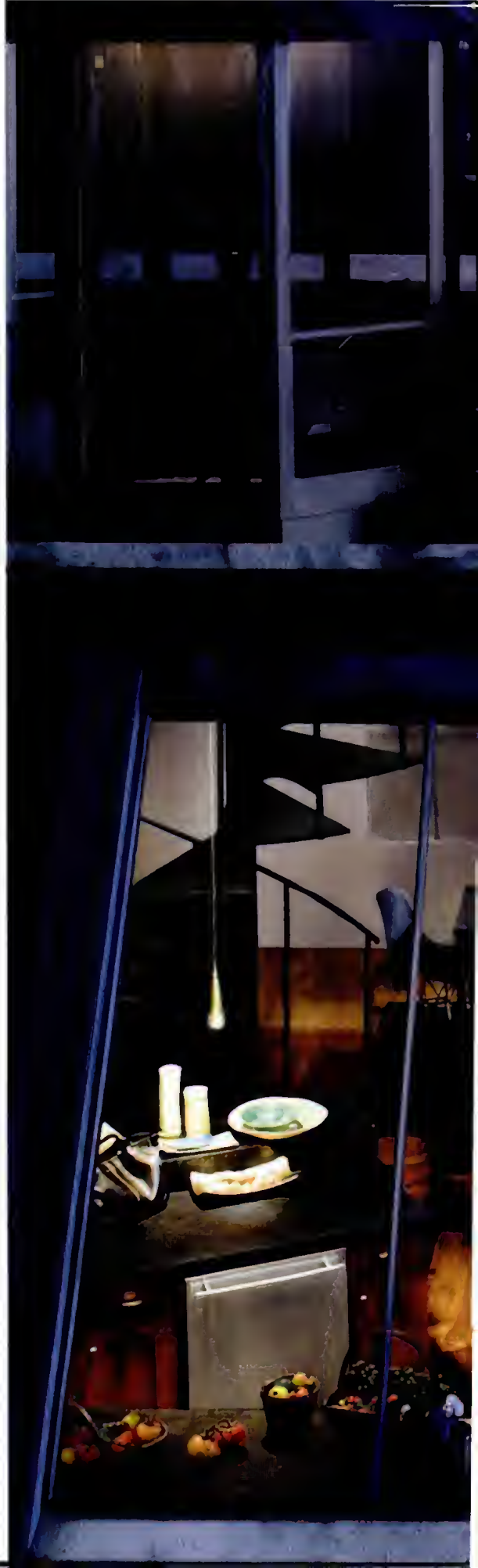

Designing the Taxi / 1 Nov–23 Nov / Parsons School of Design / New York, NY / An exhibition celebrating the hundredth birthday in 2007 of an American icon that asks how we can make a better yellow cab. Will this urban symbol get a major tune-up?

Ever tried to catch a cab at rush hour, when every driver's shift is ending, or watched helplessly as two cabbies in unair-conditioned cars almost come to blows? Last June, New York–based nonprofit the Design Trust for Public Space called together artists, designers, public officials, transportation experts, and taxi industry leaders to improve hack life. The workshops explored not just the design of the vehicle itself, but also energy-efficiency, accessibility for the disabled, and quality-of-life concerns for fares and drivers alike. The resulting exhibition features models, renderings, and drawings of concepts by designers, including Ideo, Pentagram, and Antenna. It will include Truck's playful yellow street furniture, which would give cabbies the real estate to chat and chew on breaks, and CityStreets' tall, narrow, hybrid vehicle, called Cabsule, with a "super-comfortable" cockpit and wireless hailing and dispatching capabilities. We hope these schemes don't remain parked in the gallery. parsons.newschool.edu/events

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Flirtstones / By Barbara Goltermann for SpHaus
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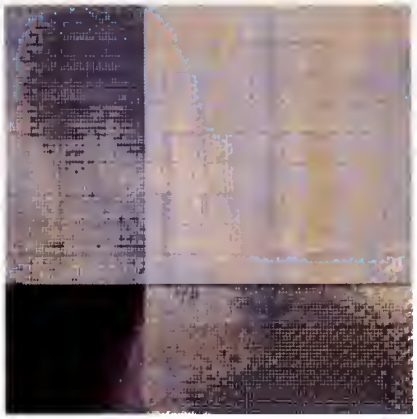
Programma 8 / By Franco Sargiani and Eija Helander for Alessi
Named to fit Alessi's catalog structure in the 1970s—which divided its products by type, then subdivided them into programs—these modular pieces integrate table service with cooking and food preparation through their focus on multifunctional and interchangeable design. www.alessi.com



De Young Museum / San Francisco, CA
Suprisingly, many San Franciscans initially considered Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron's design for the new de Young Museum a blight on Golden Gate Park. The dramatic tower was said to disturb the tree line, and the copper siding was decried as incongruous with its surroundings. But the finished product, set to open October 15, is a spectacular merging of light, space, and materials whose presence should quell even the most vocal dissenters. www.thinker.org

INDEX: 2005 / 23 Sept–13 Nov / Various locations / Copenhagen, Denmark
Proving to the world that good design is not just about pretty colors and appealing forms, the Dutch created the INDEX award to celebrate innovation, ingenuity, and the intrinsic usefulness of products. The work of over 100 award hopefuls will be on display throughout the city, with entries including a solar pasteurization unit for HIV-infected breast milk, a robot assistant for the elderly, and a bike designed to facilitate family transport (at right). www.index2005.dk

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Denyse Schmidt Quilts / By Denyse Schmidt / Chronicle Books / $24.95

Not everyone has a grandmother to teach them to sew, let alone tutor them in the art of quilting. But as the number of autodidact knitters and sewers increases, so too is the demand for a how-to guide for this fading art form. This book is filled with step-by-step instructions for projects ranging from muffs to slippers to modern quilting patterns. Schmidt's designs lend a fresh eye to an age-old tradition. www.chroniclebooks.com

PHOTO BY PETER BELANGER (BOOK)

Eva / By Christopher Alvarado for Bernhardt Design

The Art Center College of Design's collaboration with Bernhardt Design on a collection of student-designed furniture has not only afforded students the opportunity to learn about design, from conception to manufacturing and marketing, it has also resulted in some inspired creations—like this swoon-inducing chair. www.bernhardtdesign.com

The Matter of Time / Installation by Richard Serra for the Guggenheim Bilbao

Richard Serra's *The Matter of Time* will permanently inhabit the Guggenheim Bilbao's largest gallery, a 32,000-square-foot room lit naturally by a complex ceiling of curvaceously angled skylights. At the unveiling, Serra, surrounded by a group of journalists, exclaimed abrasively, "I don't think of my piece as a container for the superfluity of the architecture." Abrasion continues—dynamic and beautiful—between the sculptures and their space. www.guggenheim-bilbao.es

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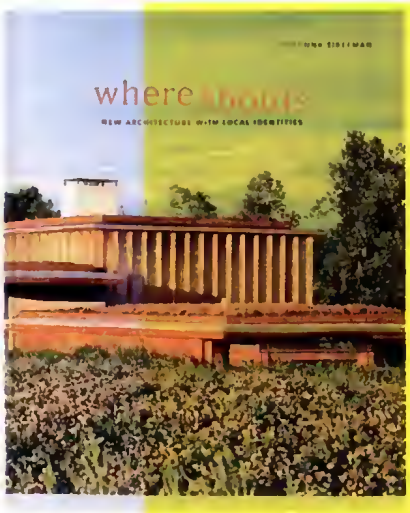
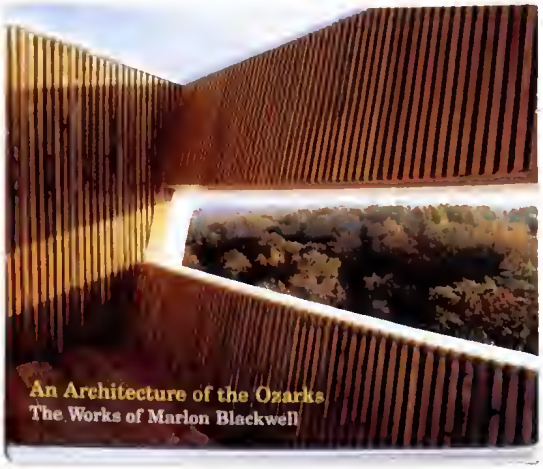
Modern Across America in Print / Over the last few decades, almost every corner of our country has been strip-malled, McMansioned, and Wal-Marted into homogeneity. Thankfully, a new generation of undaunted architectural pioneers are making a stand—as documented by a number of new books dedicated to their works.





Clockwise from left:
Julie Snow Architects / By Julie Snow / Princeton Architectural Press / $40 / www.papress.com
Whereabouts: New Architecture with Local Identities / By Susanna Sirefman / The Monticelli Press / $40 / www.monacellipress.com
Plain Modern: The Architecture of Brian MacKay-Lyons / By Malcolm Quantrill / Princeton Architectural Press / $40 / www.papress.com
An Architecture of the Ozarks: The Works of Marlon Blackwell / Princeton Architectural Press / $40 / www.papress.com

As her monograph makes clear, Julie Snow, working out of Minneapolis, Minnesota, is indebted to a Case Study aesthetic, but has created a body of work that takes full advantage of the northern climate. Hers is a green architecture born out of solid, lasting materials and intelligent design decisions. Further north, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the shingled exteriors of Brian Mackay-Lyons's work speak to the vernacular style of coastal farmhouses; *Plain Modern* radiates a sense of timelessness so elusive in today's world. The work of Fayetteville, Arkansas–based Marlon Blackwell, as depicted in *An Architecture of the Ozarks*, takes on an organic complexity (beehives and dragonflies serve as inspiration). Blackwell's down-home sophistication belies prevailing perceptions of the Bible Belt.

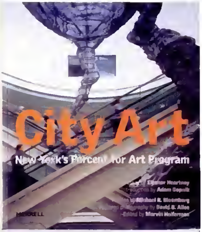
In her introduction to *Whereabouts*, Susanna Sirefman writes a passage that could be applied to each of the above architects: "Salient regional qualities—construction techniques, materials, cultural idioms—have not vanished; rather, they are reimagined, redefined. Local climate, geography, topology, sociology, and psychology all play an important part." Working backward from the International Style (which sought to create universal design principals—now showing at a downtown near you), Snow, Mackay-Lyons, Blackwell, and the host of architects featured in *Whereabouts* each apply the blueprint of modernism to a body of work that functions to its highest potential in its given environment. You might call it local flavor.

PHOTOS BY PETER BELANGER


Tretorn
Wanderlust
www.tretorn

Doze / By Zeitraum

Collegiate life was so simple in terms of design: House cleaning was ignored, sofas were secondhand, and the bed was a futon thrown on the floor. Though we don't yearn for those days of beer-sticky surfaces and snoring roommates, we do sometimes miss that ease of decor. The Doze bed offers an adult version of the dorm-room aesthetic, a basic horizontal plane on which to collapse at the end of the day. The difference? A sleek, solid wood frame and a backacheless night's sleep. www.zeitraum-moebel.de

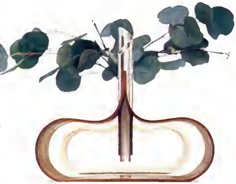


City Art / By Eleanor Heartney / $49.95 / Merrell Publishers

The Percent for Art program was created to support public art and the near 200 projects realized are collected here. As Adam Gopnik points out in his thoughtful introduction, "art doesn't need to be examined closely every day to offer a deep experience over time. Its being there at all matters a lot." www.merrellpublishers.com

Vidalia vase / By Jacob Marks for Skram

Essentially furniture for your flowers, these vases forgo the glass and ceramic of more traditional vessels and opt instead for materials more often used to manufacture larger furnishings. These bentwood and brushed aluminum vases are dramatic, airy, and undoubtedly more durable. www.skramfurniture.com.



Jean Prouvé: Three Nomadic Structures / 14 Aug–27 Nov / MOCA / Los Angeles, CA

Numerous architects' and designers' portfolios contain ideas that have never made it past the computer screen. To that, we believe, Prouvé would let out a hearty guffaw. "Never design anything that cannot be made." He lived by this maxim, creating furniture and buildings that were easy to construct and intended for mass production. An engineer by training, Prouvé was partial to prefabricated systems, three of which are displayed through photos, objects, and parts of systems. www.moca.org

PHOTO BY PETER BELANGER (BOOK). COURTESY SOTHEBY'S INC /

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Patrick Tourneboeuf: The Museum Project / 10 Sept–19 Oct / MB Fine Art / West Hollywood, CA

Tourneboeuf unwittingly began his museum project when he was commissioned by the Cultural Minister of France to document the renovation of the Pompidou Center. The resulting photographs landed him subsequent commissions to photograph the renovation of the Grand Palais in Paris (1999) and the reconstruction of the Chateau de Versailles (2002). Similar to the works coming out of the Becher School, Tourneboeuf's photographs capture the absence of life in places designed to be peopled; the expropriated galleries result in lush images of vacant, storied spaces. www.mbfala.com

Suggestion / by Illegal Art / Chronicle Books / $12.95

Collected from various locales in and around NYC, this compendium indulges the random thoughts of common folk by asking them to contribute to an omnipresent suggestion box. A noble endeavor, with sometimes poignant and humorous results, but that just as often reads like a transcription of bathroom grafitti. www.chroniclebooks.com

Barbarella table / By Blu Dot

Without *Barbarella*, the 1968 sci-fi fantasy starring Jane Fonda as a lusty queen of the galaxy, pop culture would be without one of its favored barometers of kitsch (and Duran Duran, named after the film's notorious villain Durand Durand, would be nameless). The powder-coated-steel Barbarella collection, seen here as a rectangular coffee table (a square model, side table, and console table are also available), comes packed flat and is bent into its vaguely futuristic shape upon arrival. Once assembled, place it atop a thick brown shag rug and repose provocatively. www.bludot.com

Doggyboy / By Fatboy

The days of dog beds covered in dowdy plaids and polka dots are over, thanks to Fatboy. These easy-to-clean nylon-covered pillows are available in two sizes and seven vibrant colors. But before you get jealous of Fido, be sure to check out the human versions. www.fatboyusa.com

PHOTOS BY PETER BELANGER (BOOK)

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If Albertus Seba, the 18th-century pharmacist and specimen collector, had had the opportunity to become involved in the modernist movement, the result might have looked something like this. San Francisco–based One & Co. is collaborating on furniture that fuses high-quality graphics and photography with well-crafted modern furniture from OHIO. There couldn't be a more appropriate dresser upon which to rest your copy of *Albertus Seba's Cabinet of Natural Curiosities*. www.ohiodesign.com

Hiroshi Sugimoto: End of Time / 17 Sept–9 Jan / Mori Art Museum / Tokyo, Japan
Japanese photographer Sugimoto captures an eccentric variety of everyday objects on film, from modern architecture to museum dioramas to his current obsession with Noh theater. The result is sublime prints that are so beloved by leagues of admirers that they rifle through the New York–based artist's trash bin in hopes of discovering his darkroom rejects. www.mori.art.museum

Rugs / By Liselotte Watkins
Swedish fashion illustrator Liselotte Watkin's rug designs feature either women's serene faces caught mid-daydream, or the subjects of those daydreams: butterflies and flowers. Unusual color palettes (shades of brown and ochre, a cacophony of reds and greens) saucily pop off the floor despite their unmistakable expressions of *tristesse*. www.spacedowntown.com

Moody washbasin / By Ambrogio Rossari for Even
It's true, fish can't bark, roll over, or meow, but does that really justify their being equated with towel racks and soap dishes? If leading scientists believe it's possible that even cockroaches have feelings it would behoove us to start treating our aquatic *amis* with a little more consideration. Would you comfortably spit your toothpaste on your finned friends? We think not. www.evendesign.it

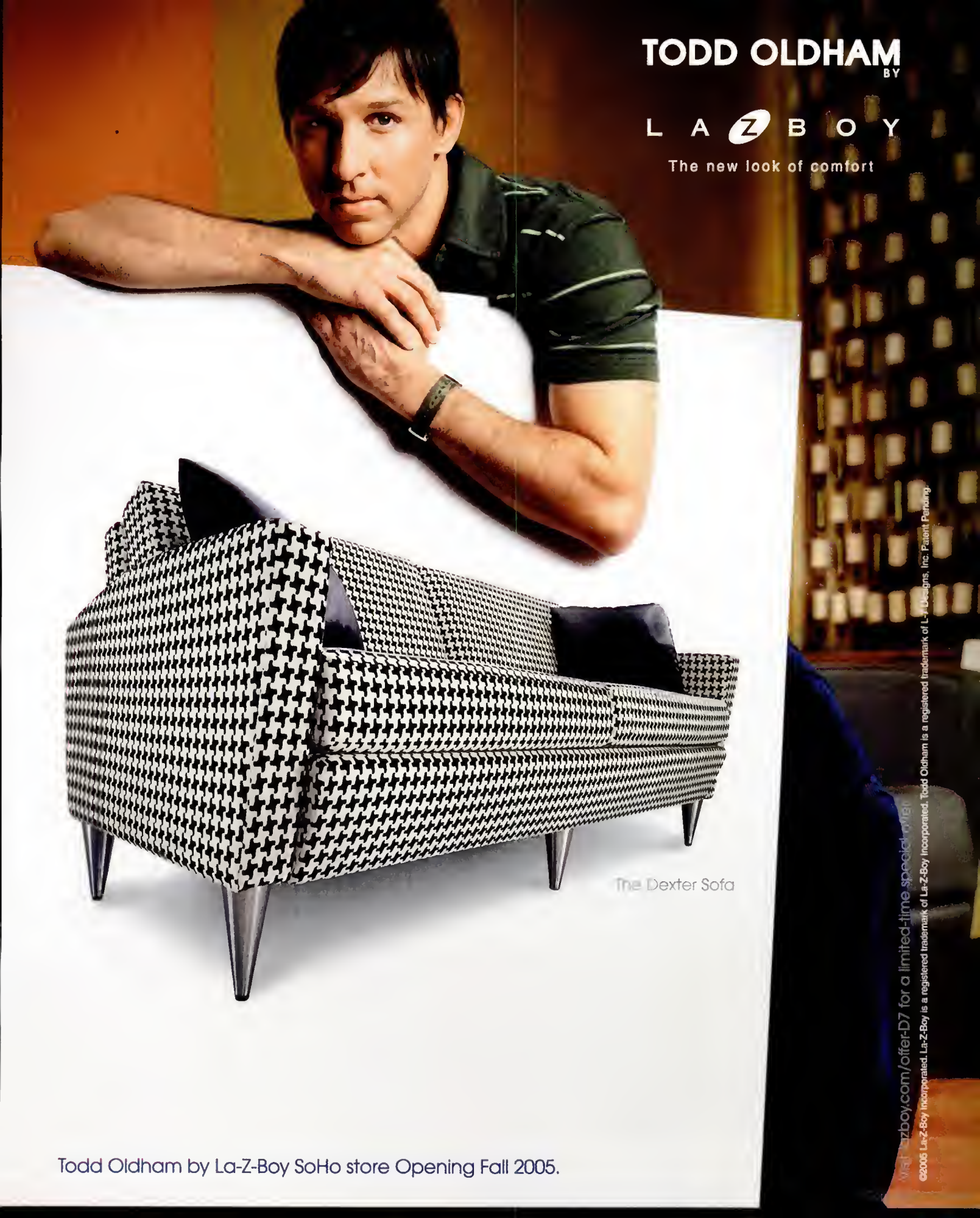
Malibu: A Century of Living by the Sea / By Julius Shulman and Juergen Nogai / Abrams / $50
The L.A. elite have called Malibu home for over a century, keeping the in-crowd in and all us lowly civilians out. Julius Shulman provides an insider's look, giving a decade-by-decade tour of the architectural superstars that are rarely seen, unlike their highly visible residents. www.abramsbooks.com

UTO / By Lagranja Design for Foscarini
Foscarini might call these indoor/outdoor silicon-rubber suspension lights UTO, but we'd like to call them Oompalafoozles—mainly because their bouncy, fantastical shape makes them look like the perfect prop for an Oompa-Loompa dance, but also because it's fun to say. Available in the three colors shown—and no, if you chew on them, you will not turn purple. www.foscarini.it

Raymond Loewy: Designs for a Consumer Culture / 15 Sept–23 Dec / Museum of Design Atlanta / Atlanta, GA
Raymond Loewy once said that he could lay claim to having affected every individual on a daily basis, "whether in the country, a village, a city, or a metropolis." From the design of the Greyhound bus to NASA's Skylab to Lucky Strike's iconic packaging, for over 50 years Loewy and his firm had a hand in most aspects of commercial and industrial design. In addition to his most famous projects, selections from his personal archives are also on display. www.museumofdesign.org

Fly sofa / By Alexander Taylor for Citizen / Mr. Taylor undoubtedly named his sofa for its aeronautical arms and lift-off like repose, but, as anyone crammed on a full 747 knows, that's where the comparison ends—if only flying could be so comfortable. www.citizen-citizen.com

PHOTO BY PETER BELANGER (BOOK)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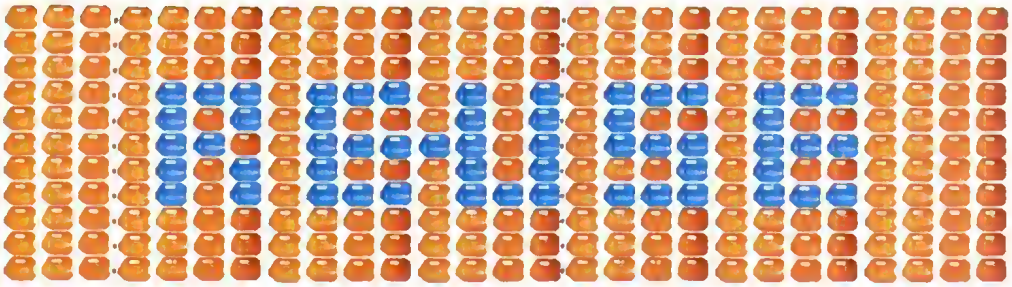

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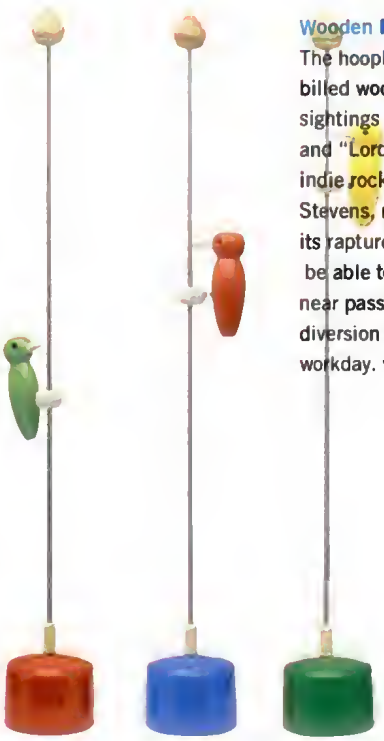
Looking at Los Angeles / Edited by Marla Hamburg Kennedy and Ben Stiller / Metropolis Books / $85
When it comes to getting to know a place, there's no substitute for walking—unless you're in L.A. In lieu of a flaneur-inspired stroll, you may want to consider checking out *Looking at Los Angeles*, which depicts a stunning L.A. as seen through the lens of over 80 photographers, including Julius Shulman, and Diane Arbus. After all, revelations like the inherent beauty of a terrazzo-like sidewalk become apparent only on epic meanderings—or, in rare instances like this, during time spent with a good book. www.artbook.com



Wooden **Pecking Woodpeckers** / Zebra Hall
The hoopla over the disputably extinct ivory-billed woodpecker continues, with recent sightings in the Big Woods of Arkansas and "Lord God Bird"—a ballad penned by indie rock's favorite Christian, Sufjan Stevens, referencing a nickname given for its rapturous plumage. While you may not be able to spot your own ivory-bill, this near passerine pastime will provide a little diversion while you peck away at your workday. www.zebrahall.com

Anselm Kiefer: Heaven and Earth / 25 Sept–8 Jan / The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth / Fort Worth, TX
The German neo-Expressionist artist Anselm Kiefer has spent much of his illustrious career creating majestic paintings and sculptures that illustrate his dual obsessions with Nazi Germany and the biblical story of creation, and the social implications of both. Kiefer is a child of postwar Germany, and much of his work reflects heavy themes of nationalism and mass persecution: Deep gray hues drench canvases, overcast skies exude sorrow, and even Heaven seems tainted by melancholy. Kiefer's art forces viewers to reflect on issues of social morality and national responsibility. www.themodern.org

PHOTO BY PETER BELANGER (BOOK)

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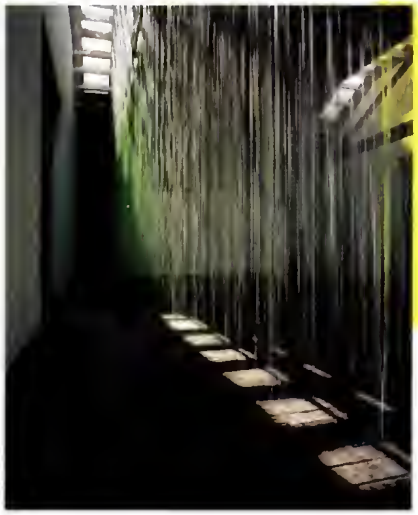

Minus Space: Lead Pencil Studio / 19 Aug–20 Nov / Henry Art Gallery / Seattle, WA
Young artist-architects Annie Han and Daniel Mihalyo, of the firm Lead Pencil Studio, create wry intersections between architecture and art, from a stairwell that ascends into the sky to a wall made of 19,000 nylon strands. Also on display is an installation that combines nylon netting, visquene, and fabric into floating planes. www.henryart.org

Paola Lenti / Light Collection
Why is it that the backyard—arguably the most relaxing, pleasure-inducing space in your home—is often outfitted with stiff and clunky furnishings? Paola Lenti has designed a breezy alternative that is light, weather-resistant, and durable but also looks nice enough to be mistaken for living room furniture. www.modernliving.com

Dutch at the Edge of Design: Fashion and Textiles from the Netherlands / 8 Sept–10 Dec / The Museum at FIT / New York, NY
Designers from the Netherlands have long rejected the hegemony of the fashion and design world, fostering craftsmanship and individuality instead of pandering to the latest trend. This exhibit highlights the work of visionaries like Marcel Wanders, Viktor & Rolf, and Nicolette Brunklaus, whose digitally printed silk curtains (left) attest to this ability to be both beautiful and unexpected. www.fitnyc.edu/museum

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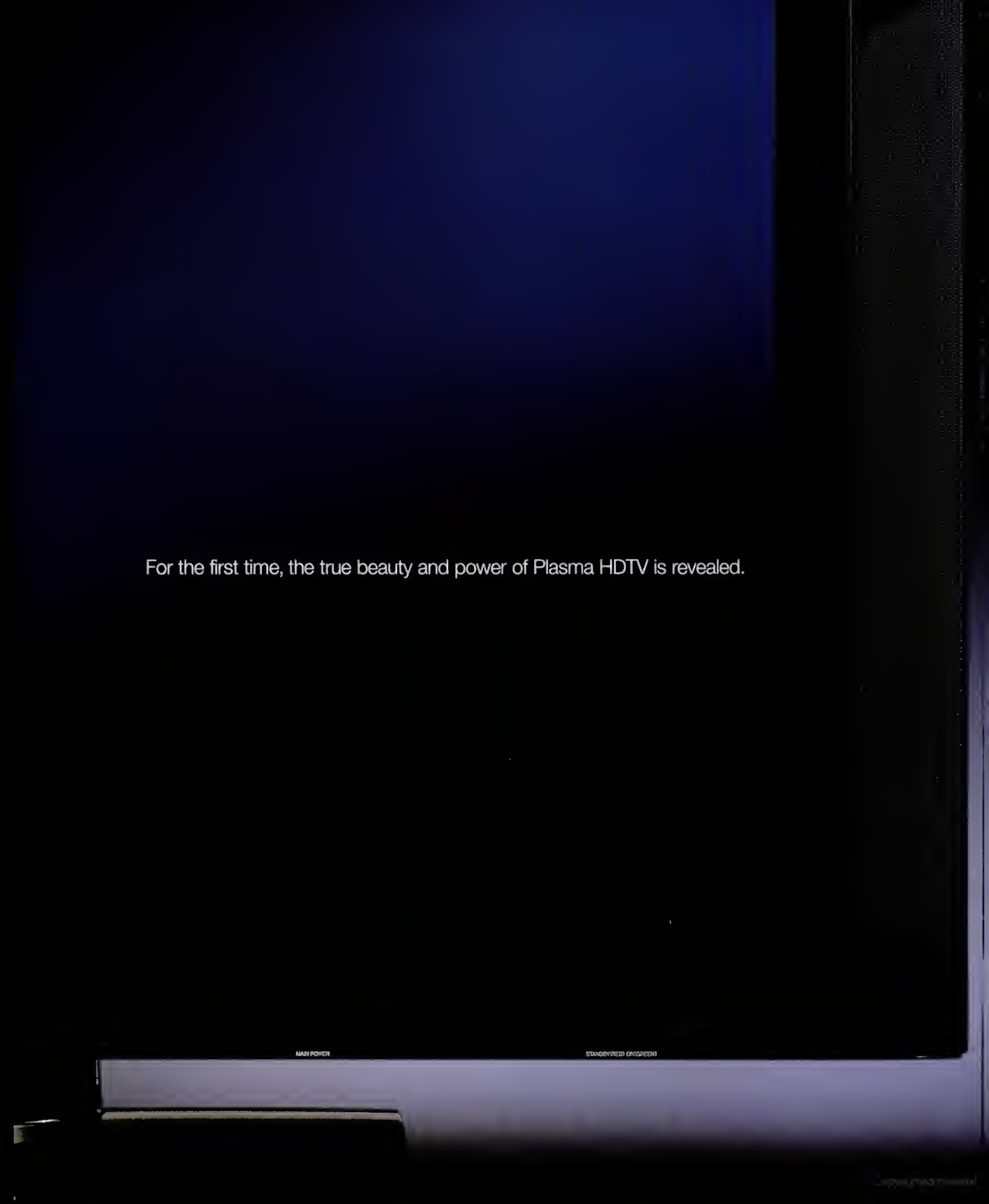
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In an area of Dayton, Ohio, better known for drug deals than for design acumen, Peter and Joan Bracher's new home is drawing welcome notice. "People feel a little differently about the neighborhood now," says Peter with pride. "The house is a landmark. It attracts people's attention."

Suburban Flight

It's become an all-too-familiar scenario all across America: A city's downtown, once a thriving place to live and work, has slowly withered and become decrepit. Middle-income families flee to the suburbs to settle in planned communities, city buildings fall into disrepair, and empty weed-filled lots proliferate. So when retired couple Peter and Joan Bracher decided to sell their brick-sided traditional colonial outside of Dayton, Ohio, and build a new home on an infill lot in the Fairgrounds neighborhood just south of the city center, it was a radical departure from the standard palm tree–seeking relocation of most retirees and a pioneering move in terms of the area's recent urban-regeneration effort.

Peter, a self-professed amateur architecture critic who writes a column for the *Dayton City Paper*, had stumbled across projects by local architecture firm Rogero + Buckman Architects in his research forays downtown. Principals Mary Rogero and Barry Buckman were involved with the city's Genesis Project, a partnership between local government and major institutions such as a university and a hospital to spiff up the neighborhood, and they had built a number of condos, live/work spaces, and cafés in the area. "I was impressed with their work using urban space and with their use of space and light," Peter explains of the couple's choice of architects.

The first step was securing an empty lot that was within the Brachers' relatively modest budget; appropriately enough, this was done through a sheriff's auction. "It's a neighborhood of 125-year-old worker houses—very small homes on small lots," Joan states. "The house on this lot had burned down, and the owner had quit paying the taxes." Because the couple's home was the first private development to go into the neighborhood, members of city improvement organizations showed up at the auction to show their support for the Brachers' bid.

From the outset, the Brachers had no doubts about the kind of house they wanted to build. Reminiscing about his architectural influences, Peter says, "A transformative experience for me as a teenager was reading George Nelson's book *Tomorrow's House*, which promoted modern residential architecture and was full of pictures of Neutra houses that I still remember vividly." That early visual encounter, combined with time spent gazing at contemporary homes in California, provided the inspiration for their home.

Luckily for the couple, there weren't any stringent codes or angry neighbors with which to contend. "Dayton has some great older areas downtown that are strong historic districts," maintains Mary Rogero. "But this was a very nondescript neighborhood, so it was easy to tweak the design in a direction that paves the way for modern homes to come in."

The site itself, however, had its own limitations. The long and narrow 28-by-133-foot lot required careful layout of the house's interior. To create 1,800 square feet of living space within the 19-foot-wide footprint, the long dimension of all six rooms are aligned with the length of the lot. The entry door is set into the side of the house ▸

Since the views outside the home aren't much to speak of (above), the architects constructed interesting vistas and volumes inside the house instead. As Peter says, "We got the privacy and security we need on this tiny lot, but we still have lots of light and windows and things to look at."

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The Brachers spend large amounts of time lounging in their courtyard spaces, as Peter demonstrates (above). "Whatever room you're in on the first floor, you're looking out at some type of garden. That was the whole idea of the project," the architect explains.

rather than the front, which minimizes the sense of shotgun architecture typical of this area.

In addition, the house is arranged in three parts (including the garage) around a corresponding number of outdoor garden areas. "You make compromises to get the house you want on the lot you have," Peter says. "Opening things to the outdoors makes a difference, because you're not in a dark, cramped room." This not only optimizes space and light, but lets the Brachers look at their pink roses and pansies instead of at the occasional drug deals on the street. It also allowed the couple to dispose of their lawn mower since there's no sprawling lawn—a fact of which Peter is inordinately proud.

Aspects of the house cater to the couple's future possible age-related restrictions. The staircase connecting the two stories is custom-built with deep treads, there are grab bars in the shower, and the house is built slab on grade—so there are no icy winter stairs to negotiate outside. And should the indoor stairs one day become a problem, there's a full bath downstairs, ensuring the option of ground-floor living.

Even the location lends itself well to seniors, as Joan explains: "We can go practically everywhere on the bus if we want to, which is important to the elderly when you have to stop driving. That can keep you independent a lot longer than if you were out in the suburbs."

Ultimately, the Brachers couldn't be happier with their new locale. "Our children were afraid of our moving here to begin with," says Joan, "but they've grown to love the neighborhood. In theory, it's frightening. But in practice, it's not." Their original intent in moving downtown was to be closer to the performing-arts institutions and the library. Recently, town houses have popped up on the block, businesses have started moving in, and there's a community feel to the street—and it's by no chance that some of the activity started after the Brachers' home was completed.

"The house is by far the most avant-garde-looking house in the downtown area," states Barry Buckman, with obvious pride. "Neighbors came up every time we were there during construction to say how pleased they were with what was happening. It's in a neighborhood that needed freshness, so most people will accept it even if they don't agree 100 percent with the aesthetics of it." ▸

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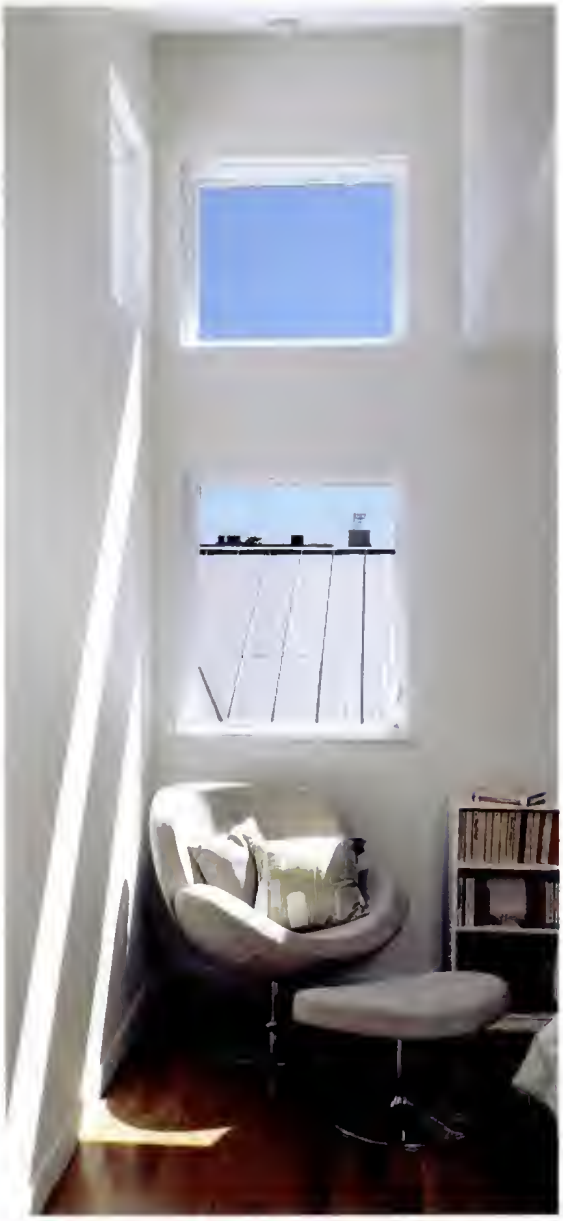

How to Make My House Your House

The White House

To ensure that the "overall form has a dramatic effect, with just a light wash over it," as Buckman explains, the exterior was clad entirely in Hardie concrete and wood panels, then painted white. This preserves the slightly agrarian, vernacular feel of the structure and the sculptural form of the home. Panels: www.jameshardie.com Paint: www.sherwin-williams.com

View Finders

As Joan says, "One thing you do when you're in a tougher neighborhood is place the windows where you can't see your neighbors." A bedroom corner window is set 8 feet off the floor (above right), so the couple can gaze at the sky and Midwestern electrical storms instead of at less pleasurable activities outside. Other windows are arranged in equally innovative view-seeking ways. www.pella.com

Easy Flooring

The Brachers wanted the look of wood flooring, but weren't excited about the material's maintenance needs. Instead, vinyl plank strips from Congoleum were installed that look just like wood but are simpler to clean and easier on the feet. www.congoleum.com

Privacy

The large dining-room window (above left) lets in both a lot of light and a lot of gazes from passers-by. To maintain privacy while still allowing the sun to shine in, the architects installed a MechoShade in the window—which acts as both a UV and privacy filter without forfeiting the view or copious amounts of light. www.mechoshade.com. Apple Bubble lamp by George Nelson: www.modernica.net. ■

PHOTO BY DANIEL A. FELDKAMP / VISUAL EDGE (CHAIR/WINDOW)

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Story by Dominic Ali

Taking It to the Trees

Barerock is a low-impact retreat with few citified comforts apart from the large reflective windows salvaged from two Toronto office towers.

Harried urbanites usually dream of the sort of rustic old-fashioned cottages found in the pages of an outdoor-clothing catalog, but not Dan and Diane Molenaar. When these owners of an upscale Toronto menswear boutique designed their private retreat, they envisioned a low-impact cabin that would blend into the forest.

Named Barerock, the Molenaars' three-season 900-square-foot lakefront dwelling is encased in mirrored windows that offer sweeping panoramic views of the surrounding forest. Built 70 feet above Drag Lake, near Haliburton, Ontario, and constructed on 14 concrete piers anchored to the bedrock, the one-story structure appears to be suspended amidst the trees.

In 1999, the Molenaars had chanced upon the perfect lot for a private retreat, just two and a half hours north of Toronto. The six-and-a-half-acre plot boasted stands of white pine and oak trees and a rocky 850-foot-long shoreline. But it lacked a few essentials, such as a drinking-water supply, electricity, and a road (the only way to reach Barerock is via a five-minute boat ride). The couple was undaunted by these drawbacks. "I spent a lot of time as a teenager doing long wilderness camping trips, so living off the grid didn't seem like an issue," says Dan.

But things got tricky when the Molenaars decided, without any prior experience, to design and build the cabin themselves. They studied back issues of old magazines, and found that they were drawn to Frank Lloyd Wright's flat-roof Usonian homes of the 1930s and '40s. Built symbiotically with nature, Wright's affordable Usonians featured open plans that incorporated natural materials and lighting. Inspired by their discovery, the Molenaars started designing.

Dan, who once worked as a carpenter at a nuclear power plant, rounded out his skills by taking courses in renewable energy and architectural drafting. He completed the conceptual and technical drawings for the cabin, then enlisted the help of structural engineer David Bowick. "Modernism can be a real fetish. And it can be ▸

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Barerock's minimal interior is augmented by a built-in dining area made from African padauk, a decay-resistant hardwood. The mirrored kitchen wall echoes the exterior's distinguishing feature.

extremely complex or it can be simple," says Bowick. "Dan made it simple."

Dan and Diane knew they wanted their cabin to have large windows, and one day, by chance, they heard a radio interview with a recycler who was in the process of reclaiming 4,000 windows from two Toronto office towers. Within hours, the Molenaars had ordered 40 of the highly reflective bronze pieces, each weighing 90 pounds and measuring five by six feet. As Dan notes, "The thought of taking glass that office workers had viewed the city through and setting it down where it could afford views of unspoiled nature was irresistible."

In addition to providing natural lighting, the reflective windows have other benefits. Deer walk right by the cabin, unaware that they're providing a free wildlife show for the Molenaars and their Jack Russell terrier, Nigel. After the sun sets, and the interior can be seen from outside, the owners light candles which make the cottage glow like a huge lantern.

Designed without any finicky finishes or stains that require periodic touch-ups, the exterior of the 15-by-60-foot cabin is clad in dark bronze-colored aluminum composite paneling to complement the bark of the surrounding trees. The flat roof is supported by Douglas fir columns attached to Douglas fir beams, and covered with a rubber membrane expected to last up to 40 years.

"In many cabins, there's too much structure and citified comforts. We provided ourselves with the comforts we need, not the comforts most people think we needed," says Dan. As a result, Barerock has a simple floor plan, devoid of molding, trim, or doors. At one *end* of the cabin are the bedroom, pantry, and enclosed bathroom with sink and shower; at the other end is the living room. (A glass-roofed outhouse is 60 feet away.) In between is a kitchen island, dining table, and benches, all made onsite from African padauk, a decay-resistant hardwood.

Woodstoves, outfitted with self-powered Ecofans, heat the cabin. Water for showering and washing is drawn from the lake to a 65-gallon pressurized tank using a pump that doesn't require constant power to operate. ▸

PHOTO BY JOSEPH FRANKE

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The cabin's low-impact mandate extends to its rechargeable Bose stereo, and on-demand propane water heater and refrigerator. Even the urbane 19,000 BTU commercial-grade Wolf stove has been converted from natural gas to propane—an indulgent concession. Wiring was installed in Barerock in case electricity is used in the future; it currently isn't.

The cabin, which took two years to build, and cost less than $165,000, has opened up new opportunities for the enterprising couple. In 2004, the Molenaars started Mafco House, a design and project-management company, to help others build their own low-impact contemporary cottages.

Business concerns, however, take a backseat to hiking and relaxing at the property. Although Barerock is just a few hours and a boat ride from the heart of downtown Toronto, its privacy and peacefulness are an entire mindset away. "It makes you appreciate life a little differently," says Diane. "You notice a lot more waste when you're back in a big city." ■

What a Drag

Barerock's low-impact minimalist charm is due in part to its rugged location on secluded Drag Lake. The lack of road access ruled out the use of heavy equipment to construct the house, and just getting the materials to the site required major effort. (The topography had stymied previous generations of loggers who harvested the surrounding area, but left the Molenaars' property untouched.) "The whole challenge of figuring it out was amazing," says Diane.

After an aborted attempt to airlift material to the property using a helicopter, the Molenaars settled on using a boat and their free-floating dock to haul supplies to shore. But they still had to move everything uphill—164 sacks of concrete weighing 60 pounds each, Douglas fir beams, two woodstoves, reclaimed windows, and the massive stainless steel Wolf gourmet stove. The couple considered hoisting material up to a deck before devising a simpler solution: Dan recruited his 24-year-old son Alex and four of his friends to carry everything by hand.

There was a bright side to the hard labor. "At the end of the summer, we were ripped," says Dan with a chuckle.

PHOTOS BY JOSEPH FRANKE (EXTERIOR); CHRISTOPHER WADSWORTH (LAKE)

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Story by Allison Arieff

Portrait by Douglas Adesko

Photos by Peter Belanger

Salut!

Wine. It's a wonderful thing. Alas, the enjoyment of it can descend into unbearable heights of ostentation, an occurrence you may have witnessed while seated at a restaurant near a self-described oenophile discussing her futures in 2004 Ridge Monte Bello second assemblage, or perhaps when you were stuck in rush hour traffic behind a guy in a maroon Mercedes CL, license plate reading BIG ZIN. The individuals guilty of these sorts of infractions might also be found sending back not only the wine they've ordered at dinner but the glass they've been offered for its consumption.

Whether it's got forward fruit or a precocious balance, the truth is, wine tastes pretty good whether it's offered in a goblet handblown by master craftsmen in the Tyrol or in a thick-rimmed jelly jar. But despite any skepticism you may harbor, it really does taste better in the right glass. As wine expert and educator Rebecca Chapa explains, "The purpose of a glass is for the aroma of the wine to rest above it. The glass should tilt slightly inward to capture the essence of wine. Swirling the wine then releases aromatic esters and compounds. Design should make that process easier."

And it does. We expected Chapa, who has taught hundreds of students to appreciate the finer points of a Santa Barbara pinot noir or Spanish rosé through her Wines by the Class program, to be able to make distinctions from one glass to the next. But we were pleasantly surprised that we could make some of those distinctions as well. Wine does taste and smell different from glass to glass, depending on size, shape, and material, and while you'll probably enjoy drinking it from any of them, why not find the optimal one?

As Chapa explains, "I'd be happy to drink out of a plastic cup, but a nice glass changes the experience."

In terms of the wine that goes into the glass, Chapa stresses that people shouldn't be intimidated. "Once you start learning, you discover there's so much more to learn so just enjoy the journey." ▸

A Note on Our Expert:
Growing up with parents who owned a restaurant inspired Rebecca Chapa to attend the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University at age 18. Like most college kids would, Chapa jumped at the chance to take a wine class in her junior year, but by the time she got to the advanced course, it wasn't just a license to party in the classroom, it was an obsession. "I finally got it," she explains. "I understood what about wine was exciting and I realized that this would be the most incredible career I could dream of." A job at New York City's Windows on the World restaurant after graduation got her wine career off the ground; she soon became cellar master, controlling a wine inventory of over 1,200 selections and more than 16,000 bottles. She has since honed her wine expertise at restaurants like Montrachet, Nobu, Rubicon, and Jardinière. She has been an independent consultant and teacher, and now works as estate ambassador for the Niebaum-Coppola winery in the Napa Valley. "Being in this industry allows you to meet people who all share the same passion," says Chapa. "The language of wine is universal—it's all about enjoyment and relaxation—nothing could be more fun.

Essence glass by Iittala / $20 each / www.iittala.com
Designed by Alfredo Häberli, this distinctive design introduces a new shape to glassware. Four other shapes plus a carafe are available.

Expert Opinion: I like the shape. It's very stylish. The bowl is wide and flat but I like the way it comes up to a smaller rim. Washing it would be easy because you can fit your hand in. The ability to swirl wine in this glass is cool because the glass bottom is flat. The wine doesn't go up the sides of the glass; it stays on the bottom. I'm getting a lot of intensity from it [in this glass]. The amount of surface area in contact with air is quite big, so that's nice. The wine tastes good in it.

What We Think: The Finnish company's elegant designs continue to beautifully interpret and reinterpret glassware standards with a distinctly Scandinavian flair. These glasses enhance not only the wine's aroma but also any place setting.

Tritan red wine glass by Schott Zwiesel / $12.95 each / www.fortessa.com
By eliminating lead content from the glass composition and replacing it with titanium and zirconium, Schott Zwiesel has created a new crystal glass that is dishwasher-safe and break-resistant (truly!) with a diamond-worthy (well, zirconium anyway) brilliance and clarity.

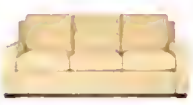
Expert Opinion: I like the height of it. The shape is pleasing to the eye. The bowl is very wide but the rim is nice and small, something I look for. The stem is delicate but doesn't feel brittle. It's a good all-purpose glass for both reds and whites. The wine smelled more oaky and fruity in the Iittala glass. In this glass, it smells more floral and delicate. The aroma is more intense, the wine tastes more intense on the palate. I like this glass a lot. It's my favorite.

What We Think: When we heard titanium, we assumed that the Tritan would look like a medieval goblet more suitable for mead than Marsanne. So we were pleasantly surprised with this glass's aesthetics and thrilled with its durability. And the wine really did smell better in it.

I Professionali red wine glasses by Colle / $180 set of 6 / www.mossonline.com
Colle crystal is made in Italy using crafts-man techniques developed by master crystal artisans, and it's guaranteed to contain a minimum 24% lead to insure its transparency and luster.

Expert Opinion: I feel like I'm going to destroy this glass just by holding it. It's very delicate, very pretty, but the bowl is small—you can't put much wine in it. The sides are straight, which concerns me. You wonder where the aromas are going to go. The wine smells washed out. There's a hint of fruitiness but it's not very intense. On the palate it tastes fine, though, and because of the shape of the glass, the wine does hit your tongue in a nice place.

What We Think: Having watched with horror as the bowl of an expensive Tiffany wineglass snapped off its stem like a twig while we were helping out with the dishes after a dinner party, we share Chapa's fear. The glass is pretty, though, and could be the perfect choice if you're feeling particularly refined, and not particularly clumsy. ▸



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Riedel O Tumbler: Syrah/Shiraz / $20 set of 2 / www.riedel.com

Each of the nine glass shapes in Riedel's O line are determined by the character of the wine. Accordingly, the Austrian company offers a dizzying array of mouth-blown, hand-blown, and machine-made crystal glasses at a variety of price points.

Expert Opinion: I like that it's more of a tumbler. I love the idea of not having to worry about a stem when you're washing a glass. Though I like the shape in my hand, it's not a white-wine-friendly glass, as your hand would warm it too quickly. It's not the best cocktail-party glass; better for a dinner party when it's on the table more. It's very deep so it's hard to get my nose close to the wine. You can swirl the wine quite vigorously without worrying about splashing. The wine tastes really nice on the palate. It tastes more complex, has more layers of flavor. Overall it's great—my second favorite.

What We Think: Gourmet magazine featured a rather damning article last year debunking Riedel's one-glass-per-varietal philosophy, but as Chapa rightly points out, if you really like to drink Syrah, why not get the Syrah glasses? This stemless version feels good in your hand, makes the wine taste good in your mouth, and is bound to be a good conversation starter to boot.

Adrienne red wine glass by Crate & Barrel / $6.95 each / www.crateandbarrel.com

This handblown glass with tulip-shaped bowl is attractive, functional, and a longtime Crate & Barrel bestseller. Comes in red wine, white wine, goblet, and champagne flute (the latter two priced at $7.95 each). Coordinating decanter also available.

Expert Opinion: The shape is pretty, but the glass is somewhat pointy at the bottom and might be more difficult to wash. The shape makes it harder to swirl. The base is almost the same size as the top, which is not desirable as it doesn't catch the aromas well. However, it's compact and so it's very easy to fit in your cabinet. I'm getting very little aromatics—nothing. The wine doesn't taste great in this glass, sort of bitter and dull.

What We Think: The Adrienne might not lend the appropriate veritas to the 1959 Château Margaux sipped by candlelight at your romantic anniversary dinner, but at $6.95 a pop, the occasional broken one won't stress you out and ruin your dinner party—and that's worth a lot. Perfect for that end of the work day Chardonnay.

Grand Cru Burgundy glass by Rosendahl / $25 for 2 / www.rosendahl.com

The Grand Cru, designed by Erik Bagger, fulfills the expectations of serious wine drinkers by offering the perfect shape, size, and balance in a glass. The Danish company also offers equally chic wine accessories like decanters, a wine rack, and a corkscrew.

Expert Opinion: This glass is attractive, but a little old-school. The stem seems very sturdy and it would be easy to wash. The rim is small and has a nice feel to it, but the bowl is very wide. Although the bowl helps release aromas, it doesn't slope in at the rim enough to hold them in very well. Wine in this glass tastes fine, but seems to lack aromatics somewhat.

What We Think: The classic Rosendahl glass may not push any design boundaries, but it's tremendously versatile—appropriate for both casual dinners and more formal entertaining. And the substantial shape of the bowl lends a psychological import to the wine resting in it. ■


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Story by Amara Holstein

Investing in the Market

Merchandise at each of the Project for Public Spaces' markets varies from fresh produce, meat, and seafood to clothing, toys, and household goods, depending on the type of market and its location.

These days, "community" is a word that for many connotes online relationships instead of block parties and family-owned businesses. In reaction to such insular living, a growing resurgence of individuals are trying to reclaim and rejuvenate shared places. New York–based nonprofit Project for Public Spaces (PPS) was founded 30 years ago to help do just that, running a vast web of programs that includes creating transit projects, public parks, and central squares.

Of its many successful schemes, the one of which we're most fond is its market project. "A market is a metaphor for opening up the skills and assets of a community into public spaces," explains PPS president Fred Kent. "All over the world—the market, the bazaar, the souk—they're the most active and energetic places, where you can find the greatest entrepreneurism."

Banding together with transit officials, government leaders, city planners, and local residents, PPS has become adept at facilitating the creation and revitalization of public markets. Over 200 such places across the ▸

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globe, from Pike Place Market in Seattle to PPS's newest venture in Serbia, have benefited since the market program began more than 20 years ago. In addition, PPS hosts biannual conferences (including one this year, in October) that teach others how to launch their own community initiatives.

Despite many signs to the contrary, Kent remains a relentless optimist for the future of shared spaces. "What people really want, more than anything, is a place to connect and create chance encounters with others. Everyone loves markets—we just have to find sites for them to occur."

When asked if he has a predilection for a particular market, Kent at first gracefully demurs. After a few minutes, however, he eagerly remembers that "they have the best blueberry pie at the Granville Island market in Vancouver, B.C. I try to get there once or twice a year, and I have that pie for breakfast, lunch, and dinner." ■

Rather than imposing markets upon communities, PPS works carefully to create spaces based on locals' needs, whether it be a market in Buenos Aires (left) or one in Rome (below).

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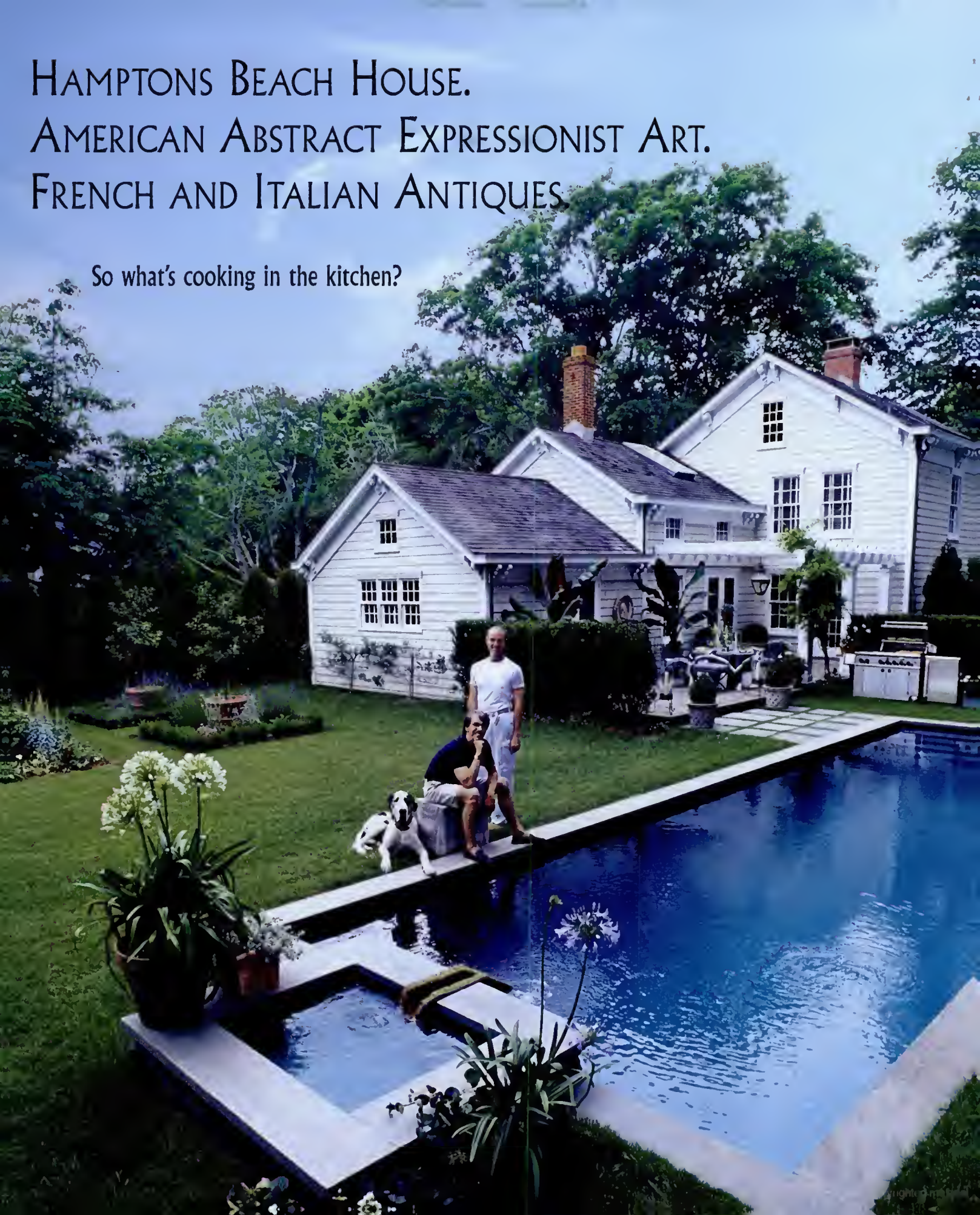


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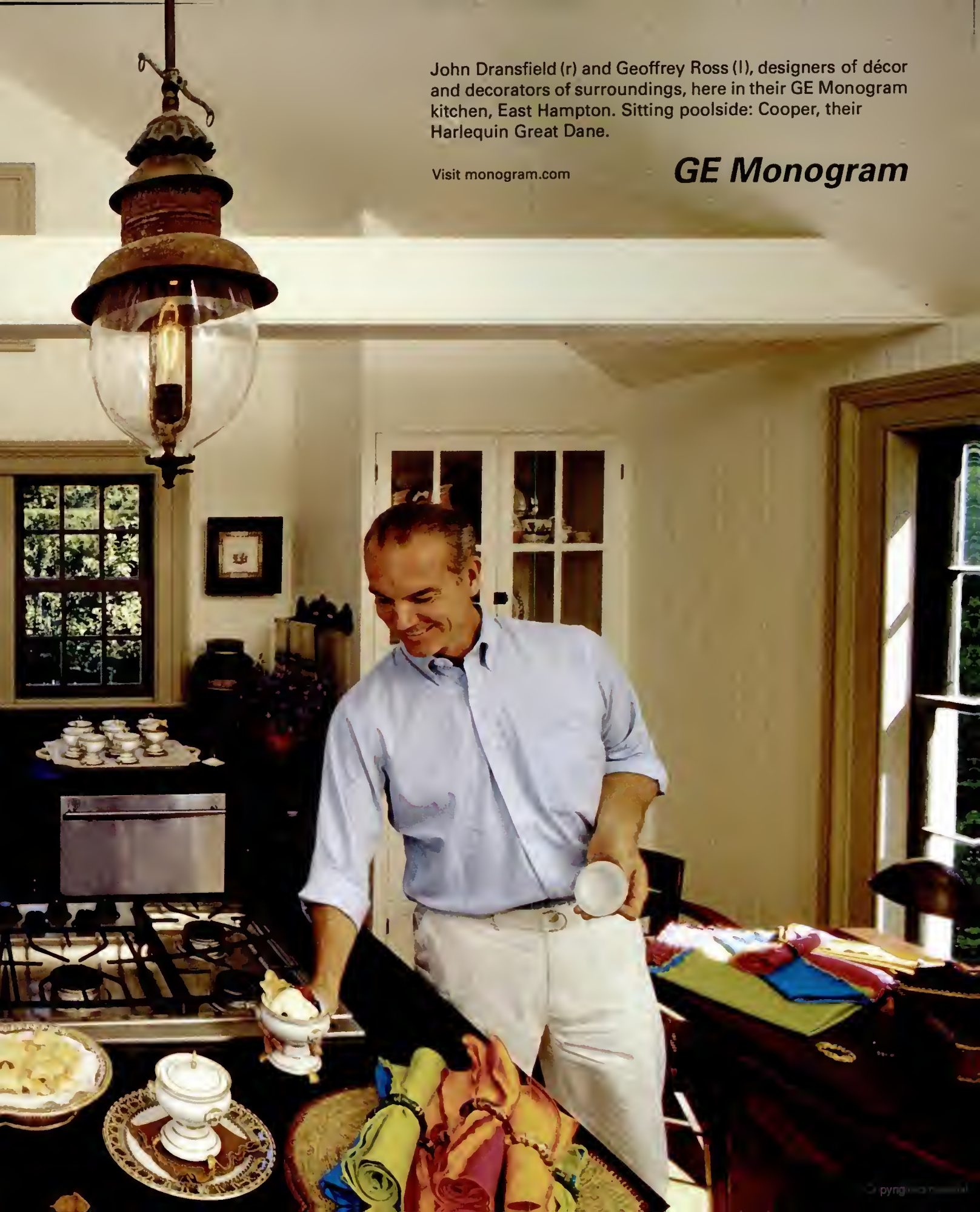

John Dransfield (r) and Geoffrey Ross (l), designers of décor and decorators of surroundings, here in their GE Monogram kitchen, East Hampton. Sitting poolside: Cooper, their Harlequin Great Dane.

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Story by Virginia Gardiner

Digging Dutch Design

The Northeast polder, above, was created between the 1930s and 1950s, and added 48,000 hectares of land to the Netherlands. It lies east of Amsterdam, across the Ijsselmeer, the man-made lake which helps constitute the country's northerly bay.

The 2005 Rotterdam Architecture Biennial began with an unusual buffet. The curators welcomed guests for an opening reception one May evening at the Netherlands Architecture Institute, which housed several of the biennial's exhibits. The building, an angular mass of glass, steel, and stone, was designed in the late 1980s by architect Jo Coenen, who half-submerged the ground floor in an artificial pond. Downstairs in the windowed café, just above the pond's turgid meniscus, hungrier-than-hesitant biennial guests clustered around an expansive custom-made hot plate.

On it sat a miniature landscape made from *stamppot*, a traditional Dutch dish of chopped vegetables mixed into mashed potatoes. The landscape resembled farmlands, with different crops in vegetable colors—carrot orange, leek green, beet red, onion white. A grid of mini-canals articulated the damp and tuberous fields, into which chefs poured a redolent bouillon. As the broth overfilled the canals and flooded the farmlands, guests began scooping the *stamppot* onto their plates. It tasted mild and earthy.

The flooding bouillon conjured the biennial's official name, "The Flood." Especially apt in light of last winter's tsunami disaster, the theme explored myriad aspects of the built environment's interaction with water, with emphasis naturally leaning to coastal areas. Here in continental Europe, where politicians haven't been in denial of global warming, rising sea levels repeatedly entered the polemic. Much of the architecture and water discussion came down to controlling and conducting or, more literally, aquaducting.

Which brings us back to the buffet. The *stamppot* represented a landscape peculiar to the Netherlands—the polders. A polder is an area of low land reclaimed from the sea by dikes. The biennial hosted the Netherlands' first-ever exhibit devoted to the polder landscape, titled "Polders: The Scene of Land and Water"; the buffet was in its honor. "We found an artist-cook on the Internet," says Linda Vlassenrood, curator of the exhibit, "who had done something like this before. We thought it was important to show polders in a way that emphasized their agricultural origin, and the *stamppot* did just that."

Many Dutch people themselves don't realize that without ditch digging and dam building, their country—Europe's northwest corner of peaty earth, and the terminus of the Rhine—would be only half as big. Its western part, including Amsterdam, Delft, The Hague, and Rotterdam, would be underwater. In the last seven centuries, some 3,500 polders have made Holland what ▸

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ABSOLUT 羽月カズヒロ.

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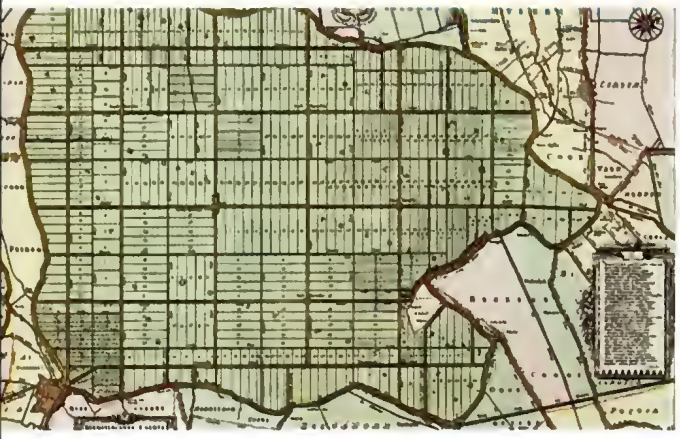
Clockwise from top left, three aerial views of polders: The Southern Flevoland, 43,000 hectares of land created between 1968 and 1980; the Beemster, 7,100 hectares created between 1608 and 1612; and the Northeast, 48,000 hectares created between 1935 and 1955.

it is today, employing a distinctive grid formation to make marshland into arable land. Each polder, originated as either a private speculation or a public works project, was formed as a discrete parcel, plotted on charts, and settled methodically, with some areas intended for agriculture and others for dense settlement.

Vlassenrood's exhibit examined 15 polders, spanning the centuries from one formed in the 1300s to several massive polders that came with post–World-War II expansion. She took a polderlike approach to the gallery space, dividing the floor into a grid of green land squares and blue canals to partition the show's content. Included were original charts, photos, and other artifacts detailing polder histories, and finely executed scale models of each polder. Blocking off the glass wall was a mural of submarine landscape, reminding viewers that they were standing several meters below sea level.

Intertwined with savoring *stamppot* and marveling at the ingenuity of hydroengineers, the "Polders" exhibit offered another educational experience: witnessing how landscape can influence layers of human culture. For instance, the Dutch word *poldermodel*, a term that describes consensus between disparate groups, dates back hundreds of years, to when noblemen, city officials, and farmers collaborated to plan polders and build dikes. Adriaan Geuze, the curator of the biennial, makes a grander statement about the polders' impact on the Dutch mentality: "Over 3,000 times, the Dutch have been ▸

Right: an image of the Wieringermeer polder, 20,000 hectares (1925–1935). Below, top to bottom: a copperplate engraving from 1646 of the allotment plan for Beemster polder; a map for Harlemmermeer polder, 81,100 hectares (1840–1852); a 17th-century map of the 700-hectare Naardermeer polder.



designers of the land itself, which means over 3,000 times we have played God."

Endless extrapolations avail themselves to such a statement, particularly in terms of design. The polders imply a proprietary, conscientious practicality addressed to the earth itself—our most rudimentary and universal surrounding. The polders also make human impact on the land undeniable, supporting the acceptance that nature itself is artificial. In his introduction to the book *False Flat: Why Dutch Design Is So Good,* Aaron Betsky, director of the Netherlands Architecture Institute, describes his daily commute, cycling through Rotterdam's polder landscape. Being in "a self-invented country," he argues, that "created itself physically," the Dutch people are prone boldly to invent their surroundings. When asked on the phone to explain his love for polders, Betsky responded, "How can you not love a country that's architecture in itself?"

Vlassenrood also sees a connection between polders and Dutch design in general. "It's not a literal connection," she says, "it's an attitude of how we think we can design everything and reshape the ordinary. Especially in the '90s, Dutch designers tended to examine the original idea of what an everyday object, building, or message should be, and ask how they could give it a new life. Their approach is pragmatic, ironic, and minimal—no slickness, but more of a raw, confrontational design. With an unconventional use of existing forms, materials ▸

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Left: Tall grass lines a canal within the Naardermeer polder. Below left: The 500-hectare Zoetermeerse polder (1614–1616). Below, top and bottom: Windmills placed linearly in the Eastern Flevoland polder; an architectural model shows the Beemster polder's grid layout.

and systems the designers were saying 'this is the essence of the object, it's not more than that.' "

Design musings aside, the exhibit asked pressing questions about the future of the Dutch polder landscape. While the main gallery explored the polders' evolutionary survival through the centuries, an annex addressed what their future might be. Two main factors are threatening their disintegration: burgeoning suburban sprawl and global warming. While the polder landscape has been well adapted to high-density urbanization (think Amsterdam, Delft), cookie-cutter cul-de-sacs that are lately invading former farmlands are another story. Global warming, meanwhile, forces policy makers to consider flooding polders to cool land through evaporation and accommodate rising sea levels.

"Many parties are claiming huge parts of the same landscape," Vlassenrood explains, "politicians, developers, farmers, environmentalists—there's always a compromise, but too often the end result is ruled by money or pragmatism. The questions I wanted to pose in the exhibit were these: do you think the cultural significance of the polder landscape is important, and how can we maintain its most striking features in the future?" The polders themselves offer a partial answer—that human ingenuity will control the outcome. ■

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Fjord design Patricia Urquiola. The picture was taken inside the "Nordic Countries Pavillon" at Giardini of La Biennale di Venezia.

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SCAVOLINI

Story by Ailison Arieff

Eye on Buenos Aires

Say Buenos Aires and you may hear a droning chorus of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Don't Cry for Me Argentina," buzzing in your ears but this sprawling metropolis offers a veritable feast of architectural delights from Beaux Arts to Brutalism.

When planning a trip to Buenos Aires, you may be consumed by visions of feisty tango dancers at every turn but upon arrival in this sprawling metropolis, you'll quickly realize that, in many ways, tango is to Buenos Aires as the Chrysler Building is to Manhattan—iconic and historically significant to be sure, but only a very small part of the picture.

So go ahead and bring your dancing shoes—there are non-touristy outposts for experiencing the real thing (try Salon Canning)—but it's definitely more important to pack your Pumas and to get a good solid rest on the long plane flight because Buenos Aires demands a lot of energy. The city is vast—its metropolitan area runs 35 miles across—and its populace of over 12 million seemingly runs on an entirely different clock. Forget having dinner before 11 p.m.; the bar scene gets going around 2 a.m. Fortunately, BA's morning ritual of café con leche and media luna (lightly sugar-dusted half-moons of pastry that put American croissants to shame) makes waking up from all that late-night carousing more pleasant and slightly more tenable.

Because of the dizzying scope of this city, it's best to plan your sightseeing within a few of its 47 distinct neighborhoods: the Recoleta, San Telmo, Palermo Soho, La Boca, and Puerto Madero. But to further facilitate your Argentine wanderings, we turned to architect Sebastián Weisz of ChLW for a-not-found-in-the-guidebook guide to the wealth of significant architecture in the city, from Beaux Arts to Brutalism. Weisz founded ChLW four years ago with partners Martin Chatruc and Javier Leibovich. As a design firm, he explains, "We are committed to an aesthetic view that never forgets the context and culture we live in."

We asked Weisz about his favorite buildings and got his unique perspective on the city's architectural landmarks. ▸

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Photos by Ezequiel Blur

It seems like there are a lot of great young designers working in Buenos Aires today. Is there a big design community here?
Yes, especially in the Palermo area. During the mid-'90s, a great number of new architectural and design studios were opened by practitioners looking for creative independence. There are also many art galleries that show and promote the work of up-and-coming artists from all over the country. You can walk through this circuit that goes from Palermo extending to Abasto. The best neighborhoods to see architecture are San Telmo, Palermo Soho, and La Boca.

Who is your favorite architect? What's your favorite building in Buenos Aires?
My favorites are Alvar Aalto, Oscar Niemeyer, Carlo Scarpa, and Enric Miralles. From Argentina, Pablo Beitía, Oscar Fuentes, and from the city of Rosario, Rafael Iglesia. They work on exciting new projects and are not part of a corporate view of architecture.

For my favorite building, I'll choose two: the Museo Xul Solar and the Banco de Londres. Xul Solar was a painter and sculptor with a deep knowledge of linguistics, music, astrology, religion, and philosophy, but above all, he had a brilliant mind and an extraordinary memory. His museum is one of the most important and iconic architectural works of the last 20 years in Argentina.

And Banco de Londres? It's such an unusual building. How did the public react to it?
Designed by Clorinda Testa, Banco de Londres is situated in a downtown corner of Buenos Aires where a lot of the city's ▸

Above, architects Sebastian Weisz, Martin Chatruc, and Javier Leibovich of ChLW, shown here in their studio. Of Buenos Aires, Weisz says, "You can always discover new things here. It happens all the time."

At left, Clorindo Testa's imposing Banco de Londres in the city center is a prime example of Brutalist architecture.

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At left, MALBA, designed by Argentine architects Gastón Atelman, Martín Fourcade, and Alfredo Tapia houses Eduardo Costantini's significant collection of art works from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Chile, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Opera, ballet and symphonies are performed at the historic Teatro Colón (below), which was designed by architect Victor Meano in in 1892 (but opened in 1908).

Buenos Aires, Argentina

financial activity takes place. The idea of this project is one of the most original and audacious manifestations of international architecture of the '60s. The creative possibilities of concrete are exploited in all their potential. Without a doubt, the building has generated great public interest and sparked an open dialogue on architecture here since it was first erected in 1966.

Back to museums, what do you think of MALBA (Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires), which opened in 2001?

The scope of Eduardo Costantini's collection gives a new view of Latin American art history. I really love a Roberto Matta painting there called *The Disasters of Mysticism*. It has an unusual depth that is hard to explain with words.

What insider info can you let us in on about Teatro Colón?

One performance I particularly enjoyed there was the projection of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927), with the live accompaniment of the Buenos Aires Philharmonic Orchestra. What I love about the building, besides its magnitude and urban setting, are the basements, which can be visited and where you find all the stage- and costume-design studios. There are public tours where you can visit the dressing rooms and see the making of the backdrops as well as all the elements that go into putting together those elaborate stage productions.

Le Corbusier was quite taken with South America—about which he said in 1929, "Under such light, architecture will be born"—and Buenos Aires in particular. ▸

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How do you think Casa Curutchet, compares to his other buildings?
Casa Curutchet stresses Le Corbusier's concept of "promenade architecture." "It's a symphony of space"—these were words written by Amancio Williams to Le Corbusier in a letter of September 14, 1949. [Williams, an important figure in the architectural avant-garde here, had a strong influence in the design and construction of the house.]

Speaking of promenade architecture, what do you think of Santiago Calatrava's new footbridge that was erected in 2001?
Puente de la Mujer was well received by the city. It adds another element to the waterfront flow and to the urban composition of Puerto Madero, the most important waterfront project in Buenos Aires.

Tell me about the Palacio Barolo.
Barolo Palace is one of the most important examples of turn-of-the-century eclecticism in Argentina. Finished in 1923, it was built by the Italian architect Mario Palanti and commissioned by the Italian businessman Luis Barolo. Until 1936, it was the tallest building in Buenos Aires. Inspired by *The Divine Comedy*, Palanti conceived of the building as a medieval temple filled with symbolic elements that referenced Dante.

The Italian influence here is seen not only in architecture but in cuisine. So where's the best pizza in the city?
El Cuartito, which I first visited about 20 years ago. They've been around since 1940. I especially recommend *fugazzeta* (onion-and-cheese pizza). ■

Santiago Calatrava's Puente de la Mujer (above) was erected at Buenos Aires' Puerto Madero in 2001. Adding to the area's design development is Faena Hotel + Universe, a new Philippe Starck–designed hotel, which opened in 2004.

At left, Ølsen, a hip restaurant in Palermo Soho, specializes in contemporary Swedish cuisine and serves Sunday brunch until 8 p.m.

Buenos Aires, Argentina

PHOTO BY ROLAND HALBE (BRIDGE)

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Thursday, October 27, 2005

Dwell will host a cocktail party and silent auction at the W San Francisco benefiting Architecture for Humanity, a nonprofit organization promoting architectural and design solutions for global, social and humanitarian crises. The auction will include 10–15 items showcasing a variety of home design pieces, including furniture, electronics, art, and accessories for the modern consumer.

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Story by Andrew Wagner

Photos by Aya Brackett

World Environment Day 2005

The ScrapHouse (below) was built to commemorate the first World Environment Day celebration held in the United States. San Francisco-based Public Architecture and San Francisco's chief building inspector, Laurence Kornfield, led the charge, and the 700-square-foot demonstration house was built in just a matter of days.

ScrapHouse
Built entirely with salvaged materials collected from around the city—including an exterior clad in discarded windows and street signs—the ScrapHouse was greeted enthusiastically by visitors at its temporary home in San Francisco's Civic Center Plaza. ▸

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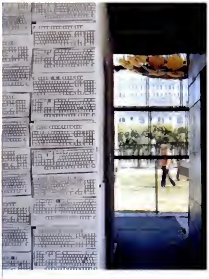
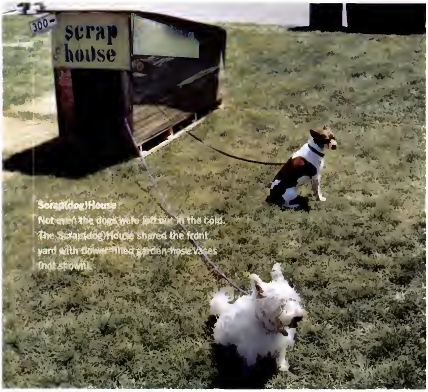
What We Saw...World Environment Day

Traffic Light Chandelier / By Simon Cheffins
The chandelier hanging in the living room was made entirely from old traffic light lenses donated by Building Resources.



Keyboard Wall
The wall made from discarded keyboards was coated with fire-retardant paint that expands like styrofoam when exposed to extreme heat.

Originally conceived by filmmaker Anna Fitch, the ScrapHouse was built with the help of many volunteers from the fields of art, architecture, design, and building who collaborated to create a show home with a message.



Scrap(dog)House
Not even the dogs were left out in the cold. The Scrap(dog)House shared the front yard with flower-filled garden-hose vases (not shown).

Art Basel

For six days each summer, the prim and proper Swiss city of Basel becomes the glittering host of the world's preeminent modern art show. Whether your tastes center on Picasso or veer more toward visually arresting contemporary projects, there's something for you to gaze at.

Red Black White (EK 932) /
By Ellsworth Kelly
This recent work (2004) fits perfectly within Kelly's vast and rightly renowned oeuvre: Three single colored panels are joined together to create a striking linear abstraction of intense hues.
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Often said to be the Olympics of the art world, Art Basel is both exhilarating and exhausting—even if you don't go home with a prize. This year, more than 2,000 artists from over 30 countries exhibited their finest works.

Seilbahn Dolomiten / By Andreas Gursky
In these large-format works, German photographer Andreas Gursky focused his attention on the grandiosity of the outdoors. www.matthewmarks.com

Attribution de Marchés /
By Agnès Thurnauer
Agnès Thurnauer's lithographs depict architectural elements quietly floating free of any structural moorings. www.itemeditions.com

Bezhin Lug, Maxim & Katja /
By Anastasia Khoroshilova
In an effort to capture the elusive "Russian soul" on film, this young photographer visited over a dozen rural towns scattered throughout her homeland, capturing villagers in everyday moments. www.hilger.at


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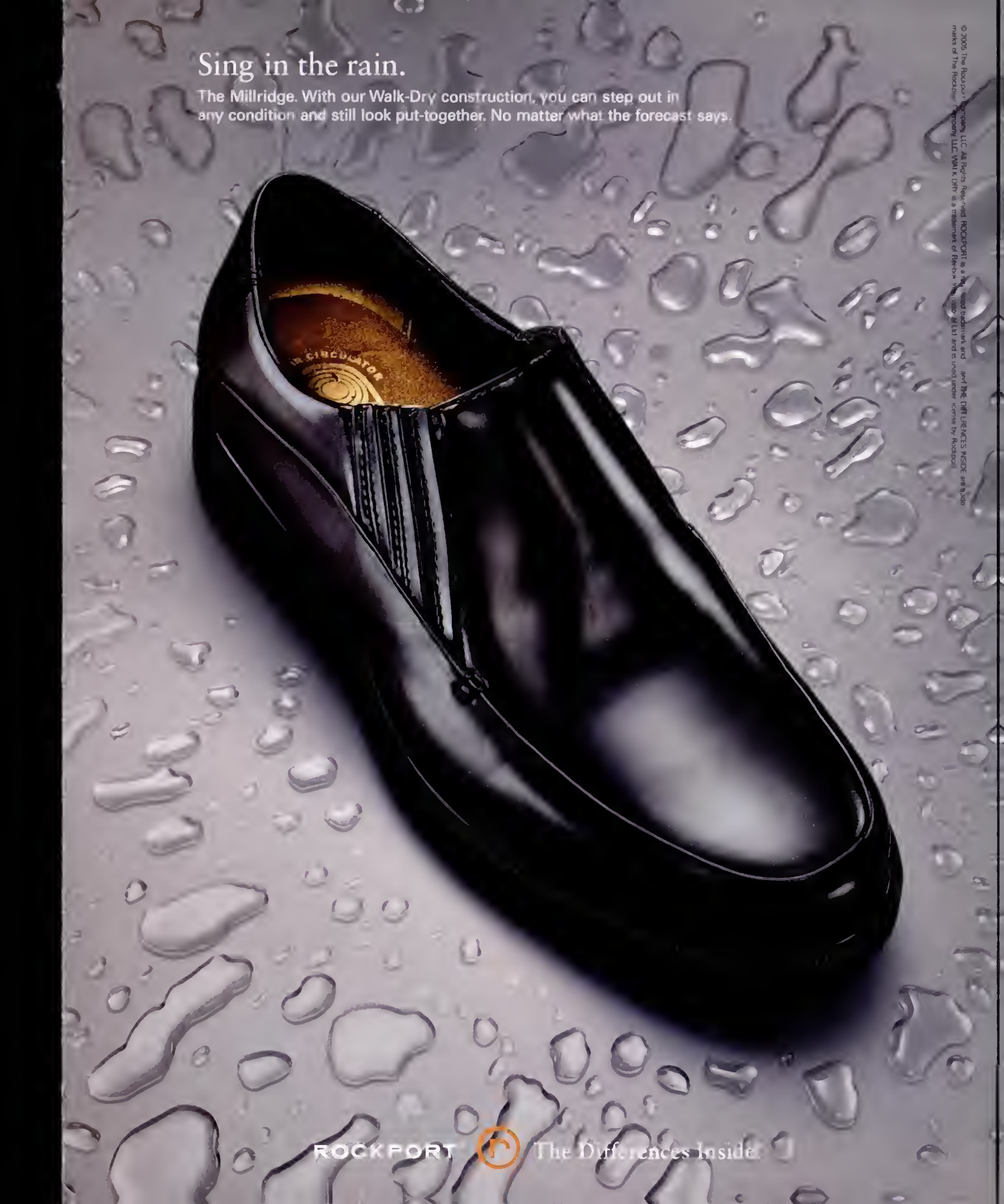
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The Daughters / By Tina Barney
Barney's wealthy New England family was the inspiration for these cool and detached large-format portraits. www.miandn.com

Hazienda Rio Palpa, Palpa, Peru / By Thomas Struth
Struth's landscapes blur the realm between flora and culture in these photos of the Nazca desert region. www.maxhetzler.com

Untitled / By Robert Gober
In the hands of sculptor Gober, objects like drains, doors, and newspapers escape the realm of the ordinary in strange and often disturbing ways. www.matthewmarks.com

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Friday, October 28–Sunday, October 30, 2005
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Dwell and the Hammer Museum are bringing together a distinguished group of prefab experts for a three-day exploration of the groundbreaking ideas, opportunities, and challenges of prefab. The event will include an opening night cocktail party at Jean Prouvé's prefab masterpiece, the Tropical House; a full day of fascinating lectures on prefab's past, present, and future; and two exclusive opportunities to tour L.A. and Palm Springs' most noteworthy modern prefab homes.

Weekend Overview:
Friday, October 28, 6 p.m.–8 p.m.
Opening Party at Jean Prouvé's Tropical House
Hammer Museum Courtyard
Cocktails & Light Hors d'oeuvres

Saturday, October 29, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Continental Breakfast at Hammer
Presentations & Panel Discussions
(see list of participants below)
Boxed lunch
Cocktails & Light Hors d'oeuvres

Sunday, October 30, 6 p.m.–8 p.m.
Private Tour of L.A.-Area Prefab Houses or
Private Tour of Palm Springs Prefab
(choose one tour—shuttle service provided to and from the Hammer Museum)

Participants-to-Date:
Allison Arieff, Editor-in-Chief, Dwell, author, *Prefab*
Robert Rubin on Jean Prouvé's Tropical House
Alastair Gordon on the Leisurama Homes
Jay Baldwin on R. Buckminster Fuller
Michelle Kaufmann on the Glidehouse and Breezehouse
Charlie Lazor on the FlatPak house
Leo Marmol on desert prefab
Lloyd Alter on prefab manufacturing
Jennifer Siegal on mobile design
Wes Jones on shipping container architecture
Joseph Tanney on the Dwell Home I

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Story by Andrew Wagner

Portrait by Todd Hido

Partners in Design

A design career spanning decades has left this pair of Design Research alumni with a thing or two to say concerning the state of people, design, and the retail environment.

In the living room of their home at The Sea Ranch, Maynard Hale Lyndon and Liz Wendel Lyndon examine LyndonDesign's new shelving system. Next to the system sits Maynard's prized Cubiteus by Peer Clahsen.

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Photos by Peter Belanger

Design Research's catalog from the '60s (right) had a clear influence on the later Placewares catalogs, like the one below from 1988, both in its crisp presentation and its product offering.

In 1953, architect Ben Thompson opened a shop on Brattle Street in Cambridge, Massachusetts, called Design Research. Thompson, an original member of Walter Gropius's The Architects Collaborative, was intent on showcasing (and selling) the best design products from around the world. For years, he did just that and then some: Design Research is credited with introducing Marimekko to the United States, as well as becoming one of the first importers of modern Scandinavian design. The store closed in 1979, but many employees went on to make names for themselves; all of them, including product designers Lu Wendel Lyndon and Maynard Hale Lyndon, of LyndonDesignStudio, point to Design Research as one of their first sources of inspiration.

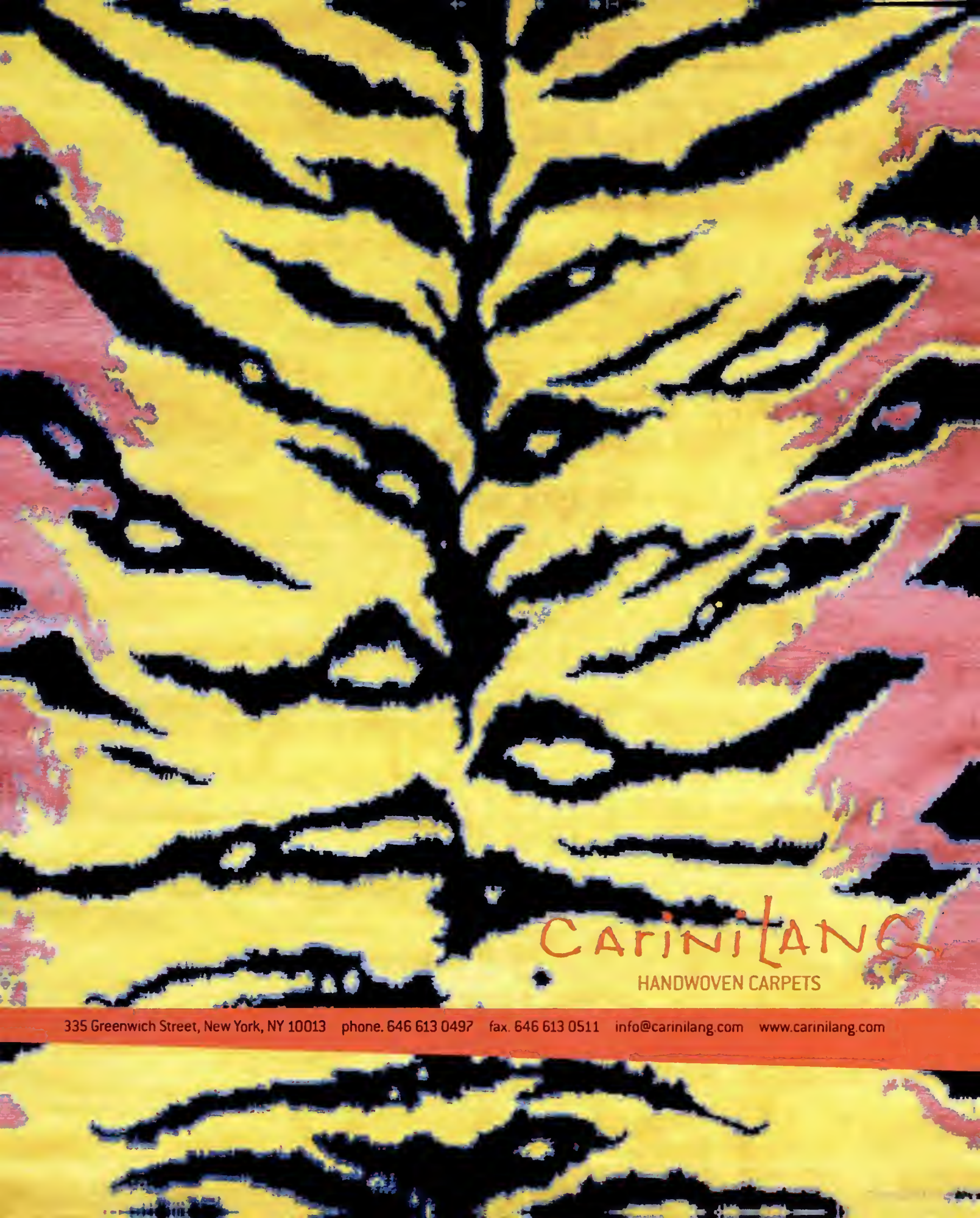
The two met and fell in love in 1971 while working for the company—Lu as the assistant merchandising manager and Maynard as the manager of the Beverly Hills store—and married in 1980. After leaving Design Research in 1973, the couple opened Placewares in Concord, Massachusetts, a store dedicated to "wares for your place—from chairs to plates to hooks, hangers, desks, and clocks," as Maynard explains. "This is also when we began to design a lot of our own products." After nearly 30 years of running Placewares—expanding it to a seven-store empire with a thriving catalog business—and splitting their time between Massachusetts and their new home in The Sea Ranch, California, they decided to call it quits in 2004.

On a recent visit, however, I quickly learned that you can take the couple out of the store, but you can't take the store out of the couple. "After a year of just designing, we decided we needed that interaction with the people who were using our products," Lu says. And so the couple has opened a single Placewares store in Gualala, California, about eight miles from their home. A rainy afternoon spent with the two turned out to be an education on the finer points of product design, retail history, and lives well lived.

Tell us a little about Design Research.

Maynard: We consider it to have been the first significant design store in America. In its heyday, DR had ten stores across the country. It was a fabulous and refreshing place. There were a lot of interesting people who worked for DR over the years—designers Raymond Waites and Joan Behnke, set designer David Wasco, architecture critic Herbert Muschamp, etc.

Lu: The stores were places to hang out, where you could get a feel of what was happening not only in design, but in lifestyle—what was the latest thing in music or clothes even. I know a lot of relationships that began with people meeting at DR. It was an influential place on so many levels.Everyone who worked there really believed in what we were doing—our enthusiasm was infectious. It was sad when DR closed, but there are still so many devoted past customers and followers that it just points to how important it was to the United States' developing interest in architecture and design. ▸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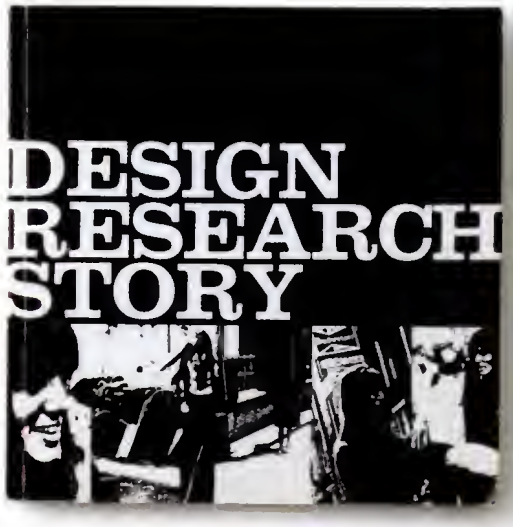

In the '60s, Design Research sold Aalto Stacking Stools for $20 apiece and Marimekko cocktail napkins for 75 cents each (above). In 1966, the Danish design magazine, *Mobilia* dedicated their whole issue to Design Research (above, right). The store and all its employees often looked to Marimekko for inspiration (below and right).

You opened LyndonDesignStudio in 1983. What's your favorite thing you've produced since then?
Maynard: The Wendel collection, named after Lu's maiden name. We designed it in 1992 and it's as straightforward as could be. I still would make no changes even after 13 years of looking at it. The utilization of the engineering principle in the wire verticals now seems common, but at the time it was fresh. And as a system it works so well. We can easily convert the idea into a desk, workstations, shelving, entertainment carts and trolleys, CD storage swivels, coffee tables, whatever.

What's your favorite design object that you haven't designed?
Lu: We inherited two Alvar Aalto pieces from Maynard's family: the early all-wood tea cart and a vintage 1936 glass vase. There is an almost handmade quality to each and yet they were "mass" produced. The quality of the glass in the vase is quite different from the Aalto vases ▸

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Living innovation

The back cover of Marimekko's catalog from the early '60s (right). In 1987, Placewares had continued to spread the simple message of better living through design (below).

on the market now—cruder and with greater variation in the thickness of the walls of the piece.

Maynard: What pops to mind are several toys designed by German mathematician Peer Clahsen, specifically his Cubicus. It was designed in 1968 and was produced by Kurt Naef in Switzerland. It's a set of wooden blocks that interlock and construct (and can end up in a cube form) that challenge one's skills while pleasing the aesthetic senses.

What's it like to have worked together for so long? Is your work always collaborative?

Maynard: Over the years, Lu and I have often been surprised to find that many, if not most, couples we know would not think of working and living together. To us it seems not only natural, but productive and greatly enjoyable. Although we sometimes approach a design problem differently, we merge in our thinking. More correctly, we weave and develop an idea. There is a lot of give and take, a lot of listening. Lu is good at organizing and critiquing and I usually do the drawings and models.

Lu: Maynard is more creative, meaning that he has more original ideas. He is also the one who can struggle through the resolution of an idea. I'm less patient but I agree, I'm a pretty good critic. I can see when something isn't resolved as well as it should be and offer a solution. For the most part, though, I think we respect each other's ideas and work together well, which is probably why we've been able to do this for so long.

You mentioned that you missed the customer interaction of running a store and how that is so important when you're designing things for people to use.

Maynard: Exactly. We try to do each thing we do simply, carefully, and with attention to detail. We think about how something is made, where it was made, what it's made out of. Is it priced properly? Is it appropriate? That's what we're trying to do out here with the new Placewares. It's going to be small, with the two of us initially without employees because we want to hear the feedback.

Lu: I think design education is in our blood. It's definitely in Maynard's. His father was an architect and his brother, Donlyn, is one of the original Sea Ranch architects and was chair of the University of California at Berkeley College of Architecture. Design Research, too, was all about education. Because that store was unique in many ways; we really had to explain why something was what it was and what the thought was behind it and why it was the price it was. Certainly, when we had Placewares, we were constantly trying to help our customers understand how they could live in a way that was more satisfying than maybe what they were doing at the time.

What's the future of retail? It seems like people are tired of the big-box stores and want products that mean something.

Lu: With the incredible amount of stuff that is out there now, how do you make your space your own? I, personally,

am not a shopper. We are still eating off the same dishes I bought at Design Research in 1963 when I lived in Cambridge. There is a certain kind of careful editing and selection, with a love for what we have that makes things special. To know where it came from, as opposed to buying something and three years from now saying, "Oh, I am tired of this" and throwing it away. One of the things that we talked about in the beginning as a focus for our stores is the whole sustainable or green kind of attitude. For me, what that really means is having things that will last, that you will love to use for a long time, and that have a personal resonance.

Maynard: There's a story to almost everything that we have in our house and our stores. Designers are, unfortunately, not really artisans right now. What we've tried to do, though, is—where we could not find things that existed, we made them.

Lu: Necessity is the mother of invention. Something that has always stuck with me from Design Research is what was written in one of their catalogs. It says, "Welcome to Design Research and the DR look. DR won't sell it unless it looks and lives beautifully. We don't care how much it costs. That's why in this catalog you'll find designs that cost only 75 cents, you'll also find some that are close to $1500. DR was originally founded by architects for architects, to do exactly what our name implies, to work on the forward edge of new concepts, styles, and materials. We thought that there must be designs that were as livable as they are beautiful, and we were right. Our buyers continue to subject each new design to the same rigorous criteria. It must be beautiful, it must work and be functional, and it must be both timely and timeless." Forty years later, that's still an apt statement. ■

"For me, what [sustainability] really means is having things that will last, that you will love to use for a long time, and that have a personal resonance."

From chairs to toys, as long as it was well designed, Design Research would carry it. The Lyndons have kept this message close for more than 30 years.

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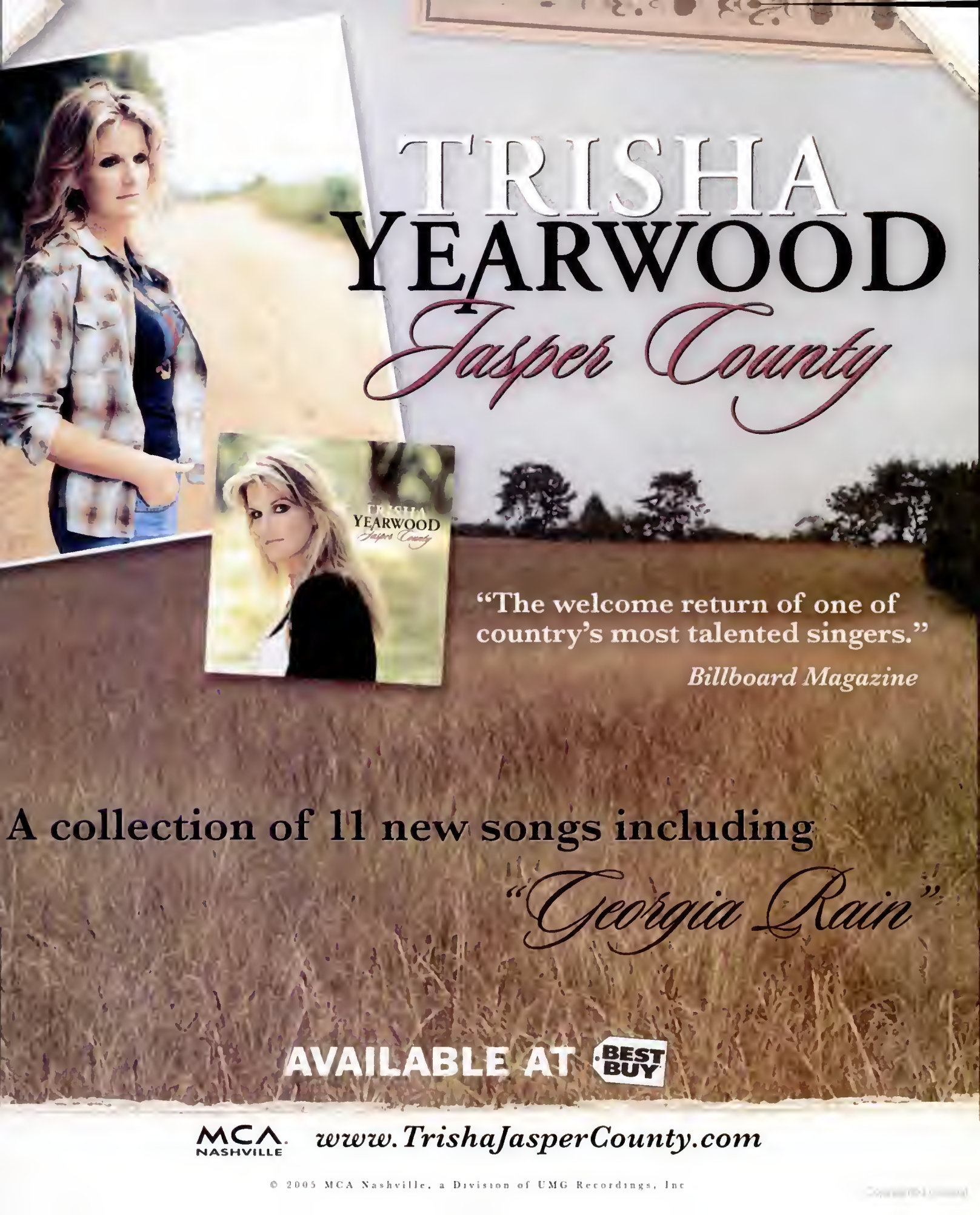
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Story by Zoe Voigt

Moving Matsumoto

One of the problems with innovative residential design is that progressive aesthetics don't always stand the test of time. Developers and homeowners usually seek out the easiest and most inexpensive solutions to maintain a structure, rather than focus on preserving the integrity of the original design. And when it comes to preserving a historically significant home, there are few who have both the enthusiasm and the means to give it their all.

This was the case in Raleigh, North Carolina, for example, where a 1954 Eduardo Catalano house (informally known as the Potato Chip House) was demolished in 2001, due not to apathy but to the simple fact that the swooping hyperbolic paraboloid roof would have taken thousands of dollars to repair—if such a restoration were even possible. So when the opportunity arose to save a neighboring house designed by Catalanos's colleague, architect George Matsumoto, the fire was already lit under local architecture enthusiasts: They weren't going to let the same mistake happen again.

Back in 1954, Dr. George Poland wanted a house identical to the one Matsumoto had built for his own family—small, Asian-inspired, and modern. Both men were professors at North Carolina State University; Matsumoto was on the faculty at the School of Design, Poland the head of the modern language department. After some discussion between the two men, it became clear that the preliminary plan would need some altering. Instead of replicating his own home design, Matsumoto elaborated on it to create a smaller custom home for his client, one that included a modest kitchen, two discrete bedrooms, and plenty of space for entertaining.

By the time Poland passed away nearly a half-century later, the original site's rolling hills and view of Raleigh's Crabtree Valley had become crowded by a mall, hotel, and gas station, causing the land value to appreciate ▸

On its original site in Raleigh, North Carolina, the Poland house faced the street. The lot, which once overlooked a creek and rolling pastures, was overrun by a mall, hotel, and gas station.

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After traveling 24 miles to a rural tract in Bahama, North Carolina, the Poland/DeFeo house is restored to its bucolic beginnings, buffered by woods, a horse pasture, and a reservoir.

PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER CICCONE

while simultaneously making the location undesirable for residential life. Local commercial zoning changes—not to mention the house's deteriorating roof—seemed to guarantee the Poland residence's imminent demise.

In an effort to preserve the structure, Poland's heirs donated the home to Preservation North Carolina (PNC) in 2001. Not long after, modern-architecture enthusiast Don DeFeo toured the house and fell in love. But PNC would only consider an offer that included a suitable lot and a reasonable plan for moving the structure. "I knew we had a lot of work ahead of us," said DeFeo.

Not far from the original site, DeFeo discovered a 25-acre parcel of farmland featuring wildflower-strewn meadows, a pine forest, and, most important, a gently sloping hill that would allow the house to be integrated with its site, as Matsumoto's design had originally intended.

DeFeo then hired architect Ellen Cassilly to oversee the renovation, design a downstairs guest room, and coordinate the laborious move. Since they were not permitted to travel on the interstate and it was difficult to fit under bridges, the transport took more than four hours and required that the house cross three county lines. Sasha Berghausen, the project designer at Cassilly's firm, accompanied the home on its journey. "It was amazing seeing the movers winch telephone poles out of the way," he recalls. The house withstood the move in perfect condition, with all its enormous windows intact.

The carport and workroom were quickly converted into a guest suite. The 1970s deck and sliding-glass doors were replaced with historically accurate fixtures. Much of the original furniture—by the likes of Eames, Knoll, and Platner—was restored and remains in the house today. In 2004, the house was listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places.

"Matsumoto's design deserves the credit." DeFeo says. "Mid-century architecture has a very appealing, common-sense design. It's a simpler style." Thanks to his appreciation of the era and his willingness to look beyond the easiest solutions, DeFeo and his team preserved a home that could easily have been lost. ▸

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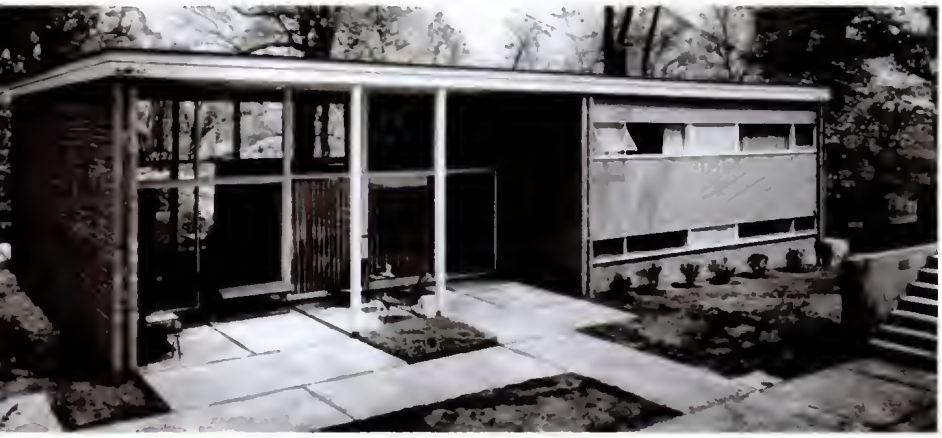

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Ten Things You Should Know About George Matsumoto

1 / Born in 1922, Matsumoto studied architecture at the University of California, Berkeley until he was sent to an internment camp during World War II.

2 / He completed his degree at Washington University in St. Louis, which Matsumoto claims was one of only two universities in the United States to enroll Japanese-Americans at the time (the other was Harvard).

3 / He received his master's degree with honors from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan, where he studied under architect Eliel Saarinen.

4 / Matsumoto was influenced by the likes of Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Eduardo Catalano, and R. Buckminster Fuller, all of whom visited or taught at North Carolina State University School of Design between 1949 and 1960.

5 / In 1951, he married Kimi Nao, whom he had known since kindergarten. She passed away this year at age 82.

6 / One of Matsumoto's clients, the Julian family, had to go all the way to the North Carolina Supreme Court to get their neighborhood to approve Matsumoto's design. They were ultimately successful, and later named their daughter Kimi after Mrs. Matsumoto.

7 / If not for civil engineer and contractor Frank Walser, Matsumoto would have had trouble finding someone who could build his early designs, since post-and-beam construction was revolutionary in North Carolina in the 1940s and '50s. Walser's son, Bern, repaired the exterior of the Poland house during its rehabilitation.

8 / When DeFeo met Matsumoto in 2001, the architect was able to sketch the Poland house from memory on a napkin, 47 years after designing it.

9 / After moving to California, Matsumoto accepted only commercial commissions. He told DeFeo that he preferred commercial work because with residences he had to "deal with the wives."

10 / In 1973, Matsumoto was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects. He is now retired and lives in California. ■

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Story by Amber Bravo

Hip(per) Hotels

You may not have the means to realize dreams of your own custom modern dwelling, but that shouldn't stop you from getting a restful night's sleep in a modern (or even prefab) boutique hotel. Just as more American homeowners are opting for Case Study over Colonial, the hospitality industry is trading in its oft-opulent interior sensibilities for graphic prints, clean lines, and a less-is-more attitude. So if you're looking to go modern all across America, here's where to stay:

A Hotel San José / Austin, Texas / www.sanjosehotel.com
The Hotel San José got its start in 1936 as a motor court, and had subsequent stints as a brothel, a Bible school, and a drug rehabilitation center. Its current incarnation, however, is the Lake/Flato Architects–designed bungalow retreat composed of 40 rooms you'll want to occupy permanently, as well as outdoor spaces ideal for enjoying a glass of wine at dusk. Acting as a major patron of the arts, with regular live music and an artist-in-residence program, the San José is a scene unto itself. $85-$290 per night.

B Hotel QT / New York, New York / www.hotelqt.com
Hipper-than-hip hotelier, André Balazs has founded an empire on a minimalist aesthetic, and we have no qualms about praising a tycoon true to our own hearts. His latest low-key haunt inhabits what is arguably the most frenetic city center in the world—Times Square. The QT's rooms are cozy and spare, and offer plenty of workspace for when you're not enjoying your gratis breakfast, relaxing in the hotel's sauna and steam room, or working up a sweat in the gym. It turns out that living on a budget (well, a NYC kind of budget) can be glamorous. $125–$450 per night.

C The Inn at Price Tower / Bartlesville, Oklahoma / www.innatpricetower.com
The Inn at Price Tower is both a bastion of architectural history as well as an attractive place to stay. Harold C. Price commissioned the tower, which was completed in 1956; along with the Johnson Wax building, it was one of two vertiginous structures Wright completed. In addition to 21 hotel rooms Price Tower has a restaurant, bar, and a museum. $125-$245 per night.

Modern B&B / Houston, Texas / www.bbonline.com/tx/modern
The owners of Modern B&B, architect Rodney Collins and his wife Lisa Thompson, converted this four-story, 3,200-square-foot exposed-steel modern town home into a B&B in order to share with guests their love of architecture and organic food. The house boasts copious light as well as a number of tall, breezy porches. The fourth floor "tree house" room offers spectacular above-the-timberline views and a luxury bathroom. $75–$185 per night. ▸

PHOTOS BY STEVE RIX (HOTEL SAN JOSE), CHRISTIAN M. KOBAD / KOBAD PHOTO (INN AT PRICETOWER)

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D Loft 523 / New Orleans, Louisiana / www.loft523.com
This Big Easy boutique hotel boasts 16 SoHo-style lofts and two garden-terrace penthouses, each with amenities like Agape Spoon tubs, Aveda bath products, and a plasma-screen television. And if that's not enough to relax you, each room comes with a complimentary yoga mat and an honor bar, so you can follow-up your exercise regimen by noshing to your heart's content. $149–$299 per night.

The Thunderbird Hotel / Marfa, Texas / www.thunderbirdmarfa.com
The town of Marfa is a must-see arts oasis, due largely to the efforts of installation artist Donald Judd. Judd established the Chinati Foundation in the 1970s to exhibit his own work and that of his minimalist cohorts. The Thunderbird, recently refurbished by the owner of Austin's Hotel San José (see page 166), draws its inspiration from Judd's aesthetic, offering up spare interiors decorated with brilliantly colored Peruvian blankets and minimalist art. Just down the road, you can enjoy Marfa's mystery lights: an unexplained phenomenon that occurs almost nightly and adds an extra touch of intrigue to this southwestern enigma. $95–$125 per night.

E Jupiter Hotel / Portland, Oregon / www.jupiterhotel.com
If furnishings make a space, then one would be hard-pressed to top the Blu Dot–outfitted rooms at Jupiter Hotel. Each comes with blackboard doors for doodlers and plush bedding for dawdlers. The complimentary WiFi and yoga mats suggest that while you may need to work, there's always room for a little downward-dog time. The adjacent Doug Fir Lounge is one of Portland's most popular music venues. $89-$139 per night.

F Sunset Beach / Shelter Island, Long Island, New York / www.sunsetbeachli.com/main.htm
The not-so-sceney scene of Shelter Island grants reprieve from standard Long Island getaways. Each of the 20 rooms in this André Balazs–designed hotel has its own sundeck and ocean view. If the forecast calls for rain—or you just feel like lounging on the luxury 400-thread-count linens—you can peruse your complimentary *New York Times* or surf the Internet via free WiFi. $195-$425 per night.

Hotel Biba / West Palm Beach, Florida / www.hotelbiba.com
Like the Inn at Price Tower, Hotel Biba is a historic landmark, but its current splendor is the result of more than one designer's vision. One of the first motor lodges built in the U.S., the original structure was designed by Belford Shoumate in 1941 in what is commonly referred to as the "Bermuda Vernacular" style. Designer Barbara Hulanicki and landscape architect Donald Murakami later renovated the modern masterpiece, creating a hotel that speaks to the past but maintains current appeal. $109-$245 per night.

Dome Ridge B & B / Kansas City, Missouri / www.bbim.org/domeridge.htm
While Kansas City, Missouri, is not exactly a boutique hotel mecca, it could very well be a pit stop on your cross-country modern tour, what with modern attractions like Warren Platner's American Restaurant and the Dome Ridge B&B. Roberta and Bill Faust originally built Dome Ridge as a private residence, but after recognizing its B&B potential, they decided to offer up three guest rooms to weary travelers. With numerous diversions and 17 acres of sylvan scenery—not to mention a mean breakfast courtesy of Mr. Faust—you'll have plenty to keep you busy. $80–$100 per night.

Bernard Schwartz House / Two Rivers, Wisconsin / www.theschwartzhouse.com
With the balance due 60 days before arrival, Frank Lloyd Wright's Bernard Schwartz House in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, isn't exactly a crash pad for the spontaneous road tripper. This recently restored 1939 low-slung Usonian rental accommodates up to eight guests. Wright's bedrooms are notoriously compact, but gracious living, dining, and seating areas more than make up for the difference. Weeknights are $295 per night, weekends are $350 per night, and a two-day minimum stay is required.

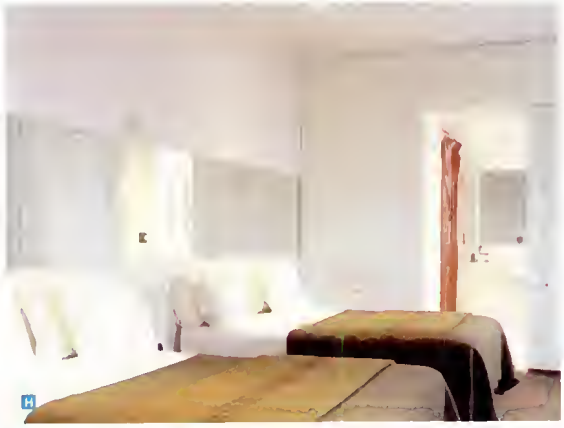
Miracle Manor Retreat / Palm Springs, California / www.miraclemanor.com
If the idea of healing pools in Palm Springs conjures up a creepy Robert Altman mise-en-scene instead of soothing the mind and senses, then you'll be relieved by the altogether relaxing vibe of Miracle Manor. Both a hotel and day spa, overnight guests staying in one of only six available rooms enjoy unlimited access to the hot mineral pools. Owned by architect and co-founder of the Southern California Institute of

PHOTO BY BASIL CHILDERS (JUPITER HOTEL)

Architecture (SCI-Arc), Michael Rotondi and designer April Greiman, the hotel has become a favorite amongst the design set. $100–$200 per night.

G Pelican Hotel / Miami Beach, Florida / www.pelicanhotel.com
Brought to you by the folks behind Diesel clothing, the exterior of this Miami Beach hotel speaks of a simplicity that is altogether forgotten once one steps inside. While the overall décor is arguably modern, each room is decorated with singular flair by Swedish interior designer Magnus Ehrland and christened with punny monikers like "Some Like It Wet," and "Deco(intreau)." $155–$500 per night.

H Ace Hotel / Seattle, Washington / www.theacehotel.com
Yet another budget hotel that feels too cool to be affordable, the Ace Hotel is Seattle's hippest place to stay. With both standard and deluxe room options (the latter affords views of both the Olympic Mountains and Elliott Bay), the personable modern aesthetic will accommodate most budgets. No matter which room you choose, the inscription on your vanity mirror will tell you "You are beautiful"—a compliment coming from a place that obviously has a high standards. $75-$199 per night.



I Luminhaus / Amherst, Virginia / www.luminhaus.com
The first Rocio Romero–designed LV kit house was sold to Barry Bless and Jennifer Watson, who then turned it into a prefab retreat in the mountains of Amherst, Virginia. Named for its open luminousity, Luminhaus is nestled on 6.2 acres of forest above the Buffalo River with easy access to the Blue Ridge Parkway, George Washington National Forest, and the Appalachian Trail. Bless and Watson offer the two-bedroom retreat for $150 per night with a two-night minimum or $800 per week (Saturday–Saturday).

Chamberlain West Hollywood / West Hollywood, California / www.chamberlainwesthollywood.com
Few swimming pools offer a more spectacular view of downtown L.A. than the Chamberlain. The décor of the 112-room hotel is more pared-down traditional than it is modern, but the overall aesthetic of Kelly Wearstler's interior design is more than enticing. $189-$319 per night. ■

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Story by Deborah Bishop

Just Add (a Little) Water

Steve Martino's design for an arid tree nursery includes one of his signature walls: this fifty-foot undulating ribbon guides visitors to the entrance and provides a terra-cotta foil for the plantings.

While Xeriscape-style gardens are as old as the hills, the unwieldy term itself is still wet behind the ears. Coined in the 1980s, when the Denver Water Department set up a task force to help sex up the concept of conserving water, the word is derived from the Greek *xeros*, meaning dry. "It's been a bone of contention ever since," sighs landscape architect Jim Knopf, who was there for its creation. An author, lecturer, and genial apologist, Knopf concedes that "some people like a new word, some don't. But 'Xeriscape' means nothing more than 'water wise.'" The effect is achieved in part by using native vegetation that's compatible with a region's rainfall, climate, and soil, and in part through efficient irrigation.

To those who claim that Xeriscape programs restrict creativity, with municipalities mandating plant choices, Knopf responds, "It's not just rocks and cactus"—what Phoenix-based landscape architect Steve Martino, an unwitting "poster child" for the Xeriscape movement, jokingly calls "gardens of despair." "There's no one plant—be it tulips, roses, whatever—that is or isn't ▸

PHOTO BY RICHARD FELBER

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Ron Lutsko's office created some beds adjacent to the terraces (below), where they planted specimens taken from their native mix en masse to create a naturalistic transition from the man-made to the wilder surroundings beyond.

Because the architect, Brad Cloepfil, wanted the house to relate to the landscape (right), he didn't orient it orthogonally to the road but rather to the site's contours, so the landscape literally flows into the building.

correct," insists Knopf. As for water-guzzling lawns, those Escalades of the horticultural world, "a high-use area like a park or athletic field, even a small lawn, can be appropriate," says Knopf. "But when at least 50 percent of drinking water is poured into landscaping, and places like Santa Fe are running out of water, growing certain plants becomes akin to artificial life support!"

For designers like Martino, who was incorporating regionally appropriate plants long before it became chic, the dogma is annoying—the botanical equivalent of being told to eat your vegetables. "It's a label—the marketing miracle of the '80s," he says. Others, like San Francisco–based landscape architect Ron Lutsko, take a more sanguine approach. "If you're a designer like Steve Martino, who has prodigious knowledge and talent, you always consider environmental issues. But many people have no clue. A formal Xeriscape garden may not elevate the level of design, but it can prevent folly—like huge strips of lawn being stuck along a highway."

Lutsko's office recently completed a project in Ketchum, Idaho, near Sun Valley, that celebrates the area's rugged beauty rather than trying to transform it. Stepped stone terraces leading to the house continue into planted beds, whose thin rusted-steel walls extend like fins into the landscape. "We took elements from the chaparral and planted them more densely and deliberately in the beds, like the band of taller wild rye grasses that provide a visual transition to the house," explains project manager Laura Jerrard. To satisfy the homeowner's desire for more color, they are seeding wildflowers, and have filled one bed with Siberian irises and camas lily, a local marsh plant. While a spray system covers much of the property, Jerrard says that "once these plants are established, most will be on their own." Quaking aspen and native cottonwoods define the property, a contrast to the imported aesthetic of the neighbors' lawns, lilacs, and clipped privet hedges.

Chaparral dwellers aren't the only ones who prefer their nature declawed. "Billions have been spent trying to make Phoenix look like Hawaii," says Martino, the man most responsible for reversing the trend, "when the Sonoran desert has such guts and character." Martino underwent his conversion three decades ago on a job site in which oleander, bougainvillea, and date palms were ▸

PHOTOS BY RON LUTSKO


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Like a snake slithering across the playa, Steve Martino's green glass tile covered bench (above) winds across the nursery's plaza. Mesquite trees emerge from a froth of desert marigolds, and tufts of red yucca sprout from the gravel.

being installed. "On the vacant lot next door, thriving on natural rainfall, were mesquite, paloverde trees, desert broom—things people were digging up as weeds." When Martino designed a nursery on the site of a former cotton field for a grower of desert trees, he set it up to survive without supplemental irrigation: "It's a desert-derived alternative of what a man-made landscape can be, a vital garden with natural pollinators and predators that tap into the food chain." Although today Martino is sought after for his "weeds and walls" aesthetic, his early supporters were not locals but people drawn to the desert from places like Chicago, Alaska, and Seattle. "I've gone from being a heretic to a hero without changing a thing, and the plants nobody wanted are now legislated," he laughs, a tad ruefully. "But I still don't like people telling me what to do."

"Sustainability should be important to everyone, whether or not it's called 'Xeriscape,' " concurs landscape architect Sasha Tarnopolsky, who, with designer husband John Jennings, runs Los Angeles–based Dry Design. When the couple renovated their house in Mar Vista, California (not shown), they shared Martino's stricture of getting the most leaf area for the least amount of water. Their kitchen, dining room, and living room open onto a 25-foot setback, where the traditional front lawn was replaced with a lush, low meadow made from mixed native California sedges planted atop berms built from soil excavated during construction. "It's low-maintenance and stands up to dogs and kids," explains Tarnopolsky. Two drought-tolerant African sumac trees prove that a plant needn't be indigenous to be regionally appropriate.

In the back, black bamboo planted for privacy is sustained by wastewater from the studio's indoor bath and outdoor shower ("Our soap acts like fertilizer," explains Tarnopolsky). And much of the garden is edible: A raised vegetable bed overlaps the lawn, which is concave in order to catch and store water rather than draining it onto the hardscape, as do conventional lawns; stone pavers were recently replaced with an orchard of fruit-bearing trees. The rest of the garden is decomposed granite. Says Jennings, "You can ride a bike on it, it's a third the price of concrete, and rainwater just percolates back down to the earth!" ■

"These are my garden follies," says Martino of these looming purple plaster fins (right). "They were supposed to refer to the barbs on agave leaves, but they ended up looking much more like sharks swimming through a sea of wild flowers."

PHOTOS BY RICHARD FELBER

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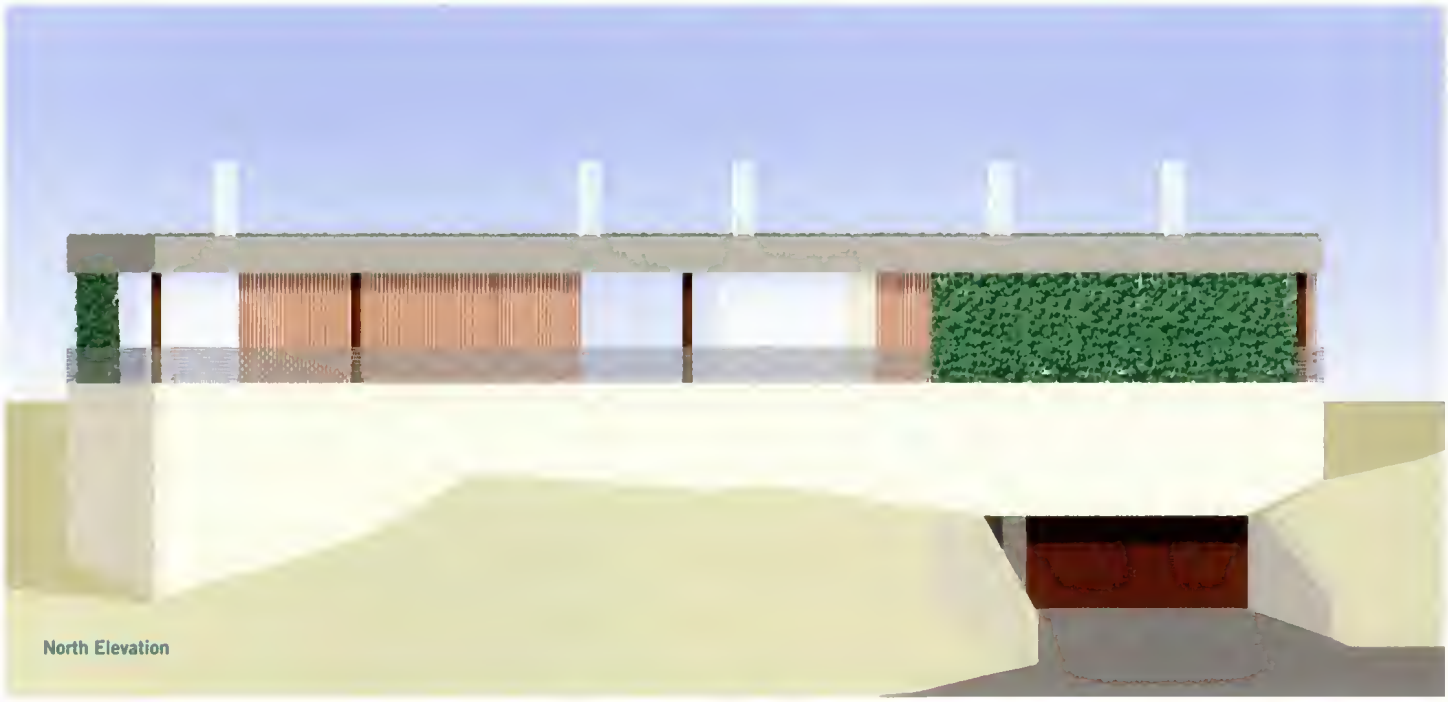
Story by Andrew Wagner

Illustrations by Arthur Mount

Site Specifics

Last January, we announced the Dwell Home II Design Invitational, with the aim of establishing a model for sustainable home building in the 21st century. Longtime Angeleno Glen Martin and his wife, Los Angeles native Claudia Plasencia, offered up their plot of land in Topanga Canyon as the test site. Escher GuneWardena Architecture was selected from a group of five architects to build the winning design: a 2,000-square-foot home with a budget of approximately $500,000 exclusive of land costs.

The elevations shown here illustrate one of the most critical (and basic) elements of the house and its goal of environmental friendliness—namely how the structure will relate to the site. Project architect, Bojana Boyansz describes this relationship in terms of the "three vertical ▸



North Elevation

South Elevation

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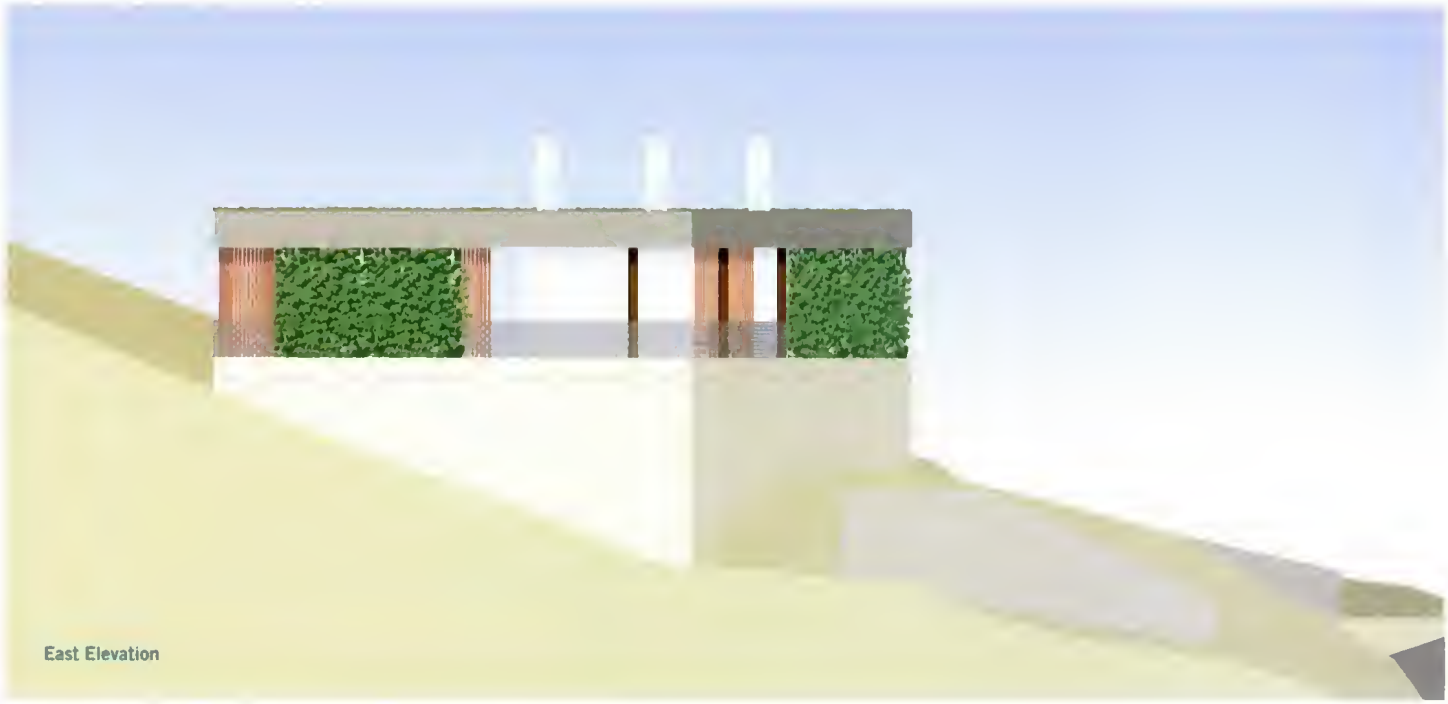
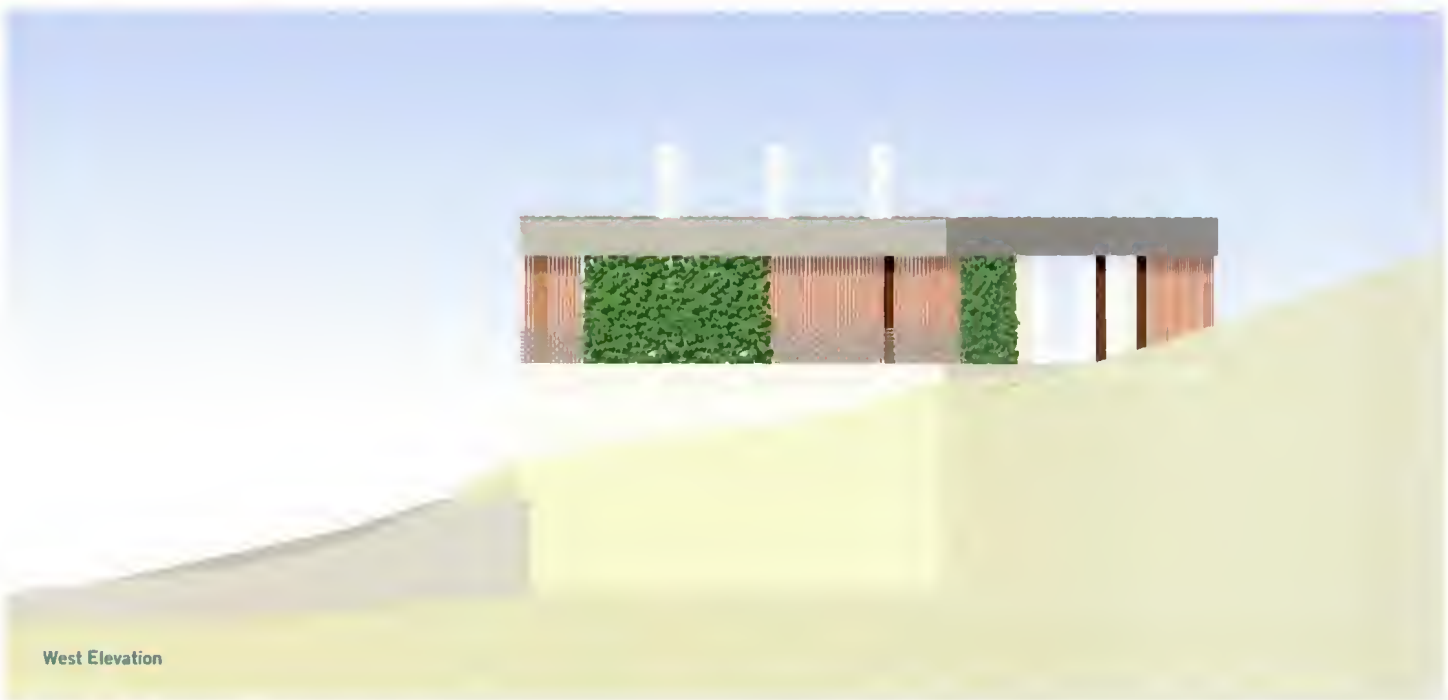


East Elevation



West Elevation

layers of the house: the fly-ash concrete plinth, glass box middle, and heavy roof." The vertical layers, she continues, "are a response to the site (steep and small), climate (hot), views (along the canyon), and the aesthetic and environmental challenge of making a glass box green.

"The house is set back from the street about 30 feet because of zoning requirements," explains Boyansz, "which has pushed the structure up the hill to the south and 24.5 feet above street level. The plinth creates the flat pad on the steeply sloping ground between the rear of the house (uphill, south) and the front of the house (downhill, north) on which the living level sits. The glass box is born out of Glen and Claudia's desire to take advantage of the views and their desire to create a feeling of openness for the family. The earth roof features large overhangs to protect the glass box from the hot climate and helps the structure blend into the surroundings."

We will continue to follow the progress of the house leading up to its completion. In December we will highlight many of the materials to be used and their environmental qualities and the construction quandaries they present. ■

Space is measured not just in square feet, but in **square color.** bruce mau

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Photo by Dwight Eschliman

Modernist Destiny

From Nova Scotia to Baja, California, and almost everywhere in between, Dwell has been scouring America for great modern residential architecture. Culled from five year's worth of Dwell articles, these 198 pins demonstrate that wherever you are, our brand of nice modernism isn't far off. Maine, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Mississippi, North Dakota, and Idaho—we've got our eyes on you.

Story by Andrew Wagner

Photos by Gregg Segal

Transforming Tijuana

In August of 2004, a weekend-long party took place at a new house in the Hacienda Agua Caliente neighborhood of Tijuana, Mexico. The house was raw and unfinished, with bare concrete floors and exposed nail heads, but the art that adorned the walls and the music that rocked into the wee hours was a culmination of years of pondering the urban state of this exploding city just south of San Diego, California.

The house itself—jutting out of a ragged hillside adjacent to a nearly vacant lot occupied by a lonely and forgotten billboard—reflects the budding pride of a community that for years has called this metropolis of around 2 million home. It's also a reaction to the chaotic nature of the city's largely unplanned growth, which has rapidly crept up over the surrounding brown hills.

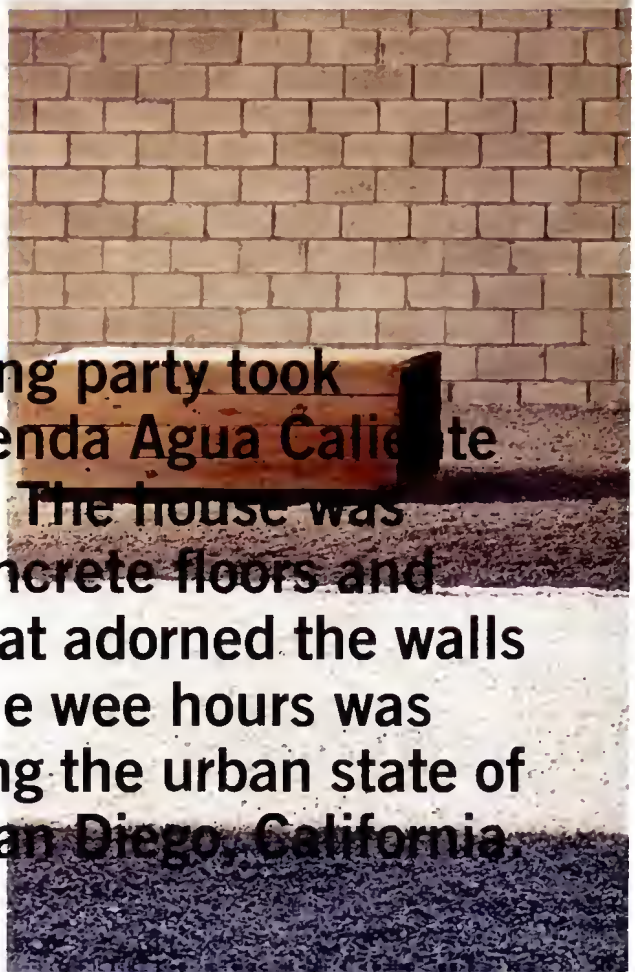
The festivities were an invitation to the entire town to take part in a sort of mini-revolution in art and architecture in a city not normally associated with either: a revolution whose main purpose was to challenge conventional thinking about the architecture of Tijuana and to shine a light on the complicated existence and dual identities of those who reside on the border.

That house is now home to architect Jorge Gracia and his wife Paola, their young son Maximiliano, and the family's two German schnauzers, Rusky and Kata. It's not surprising that Jorge, with his thick black hair, gracious smile, and proactive stance on the built environment, helped bring together this growing group of artists and architects, except that in Tijuana such undertakings are more often talked about than realized.

Tijuana was founded in 1889 and blossomed in the 1920s and '30s as a gambling haven for Hollywood stars whose wild side was curtailed by prohibition in the States. But in the late '30s, in an attempt to make Tijuana a respectable place rather than one of ill repute, the ▸

Paola Gracia keeps an eye on Kata, one of the couple's schnauzers, from the second-story balcony. In the shade below the balcony is the dogs' house, meant to mimic the Gracias', that architect Jorge Gracia built from leftover building materials.

Project: Gracia Residence
Architect: MASD/Jorge Gracia
Location: Tijuana, Mexico



Mexican government outlawed casinos, and things took a turn for the worse. During World War II, however, the economy picked up as Tijuana established itself as the center of manufacturing that it remains today. Its proximity to California, and its abundance of cheap labor, have since kept Tijuana growing at a remarkable pace. As architect René Peralta explained in an interview with the Architectural League, Tijuana "has been created in spurts, it reacts to purely economic issues."

While it's hard to argue against the economic growth of recent years, the arts and architectural community—among others—has not been well served by it. In place of well-considered expansion, the city has experienced a whirlwind of inadequate, often very unsightly government-funded social housing controlled by large-scale developers. In a town with few examples of good design, finding clients willing to take even the most mundane architectural risk is next to impossible. "I'm an architect in a city with no architecture," Jorge explains, echoing the sentiment of so many architects in Tijuana. "In a place like this, you have to ask a client to have faith, and faith to me has always been the belief in something you can't see."

But with faith on the wane, many of the young architects in the city have been forced to do work for themselves, taking advantage of one of the exciting things Tijuana does offer: little restriction as to what you can build. In 2003, inspired by San Diego friends Jonathan Segal (seen in Dwell, September 2005) and Sebastian Mariscal (Dwell, March 2004), and a host of other local architectural stars, Jorge decided to dedicate his time to his hometown. So with the help of his and Paola's families, they found a lot that they could afford and quickly purchased it. "We loved the views," Jorge says. "That's what attracted us." ▸

The two structures that comprise the house frame views of the ever expanding city (opposite). The backyard is perfect for frolicking dogs and children, with concrete block walls just high enough to keep them in but low enough to not keep the city out.

Jorge appreciates his efforts at twilight (above). The polycarbonate panels that partially clad the exterior of the structure provide a warm glow, adding life to Tijuana's densely packed rolling hillsides. From the rear of the Gracia house (right), the city's still rough character comes through.

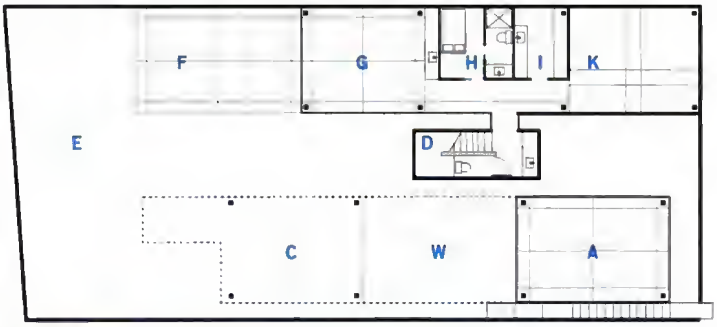
MAXIMILIANO

Jorge and Paola proudly displayed their son's name on their back patio (opposite) for his christening. With plenty of cousins to keep him company, Max (in Paola's arms at left) will undoubtedly be pleased that his parents decided to stay put in Tijuana.

Jorge finds some time to relax in the living room (below). Chaise longue by Le Corbusier; coffee table by Noguchi.
p. 262

Ground Level

Second Level



Basement

Gracia Residence Floor Plan

A Office
B Terrace
C Covered Patio
D Stairwell
E Open Patio
F Terrace
G Game Room
H Bedroom
I Laundry Room
J Bathroom
K Storage
L Main Entry
M Garage
N Entry Bridge
O Family Room
P Kitchen
Q Dining
R Living
S Open Below
T Master Bedroom
U Walk-In Closet
V Studio/Library
W Deck

In the kitchen (right), Jorge worked with local cabinet makers, Muebles Finos JV, to create ample storage, leaving countertops uncluttered. The LEM Piston Stools are by Shin and Tomoko Azumi. p. 262

In the living room (opposite), mid-century classics are the foundation while art from the house's "coming out" party by Enrique Ciapara adds some personality. Jorge's office (below) is on the basement level which provides easy access to the outside.

Tijuana is a rambunctiously hilly city, and the Hacienda Agua Caliente neighborhood occupies prime real estate for taking advantage of sweeping views. The houses surrounding the Gracias' are like many of the new structures sprouting up throughout the city—Spanish-style revivals with heavy tile roofs, stuccoed and painted in the pale hues that have come to signify what the locals call "California-style houses."

But Jorge, of course, had a different plan for his home, one that would encompass what he calls "the unexpected things that can happen everyday in Tijuana, from culture, to politics, to design." "With the house," he continues, "I wanted to make a statement and turn the engine of this unexplored, creative city. A city of transition; an uncontrolled growing city where a new culture is emerging from the mixture of two."

To capture a little bit of this unique mixture, Jorge conceived of his home as two separate but compatible structures, one clad in redwood siding, the other in translucent white carbonate panels that glow subtly in the night. The two volumes are intricately bound together by a galvanized metal–skin stairwell with four glass bridges.

Entering the house from the aluminum bridge leading from the street to the front door, you encounter the double-height ceilings of the sitting room on the first floor. Floor-to-ceiling glass offers up expansive views of the city just beyond the concrete foundation that keeps the house from tumbling down the hillside. Cinder-block walls fence in the slightly askew grass-and-gravel backyard that is home to dogs Rusky and Kata, and also make for a great space for murals. Jorge explains that he wanted to frame the views of the city as much as possible and let the house engage itself, as well as its surroundings. "A kind of self-examination," he explains. ▸

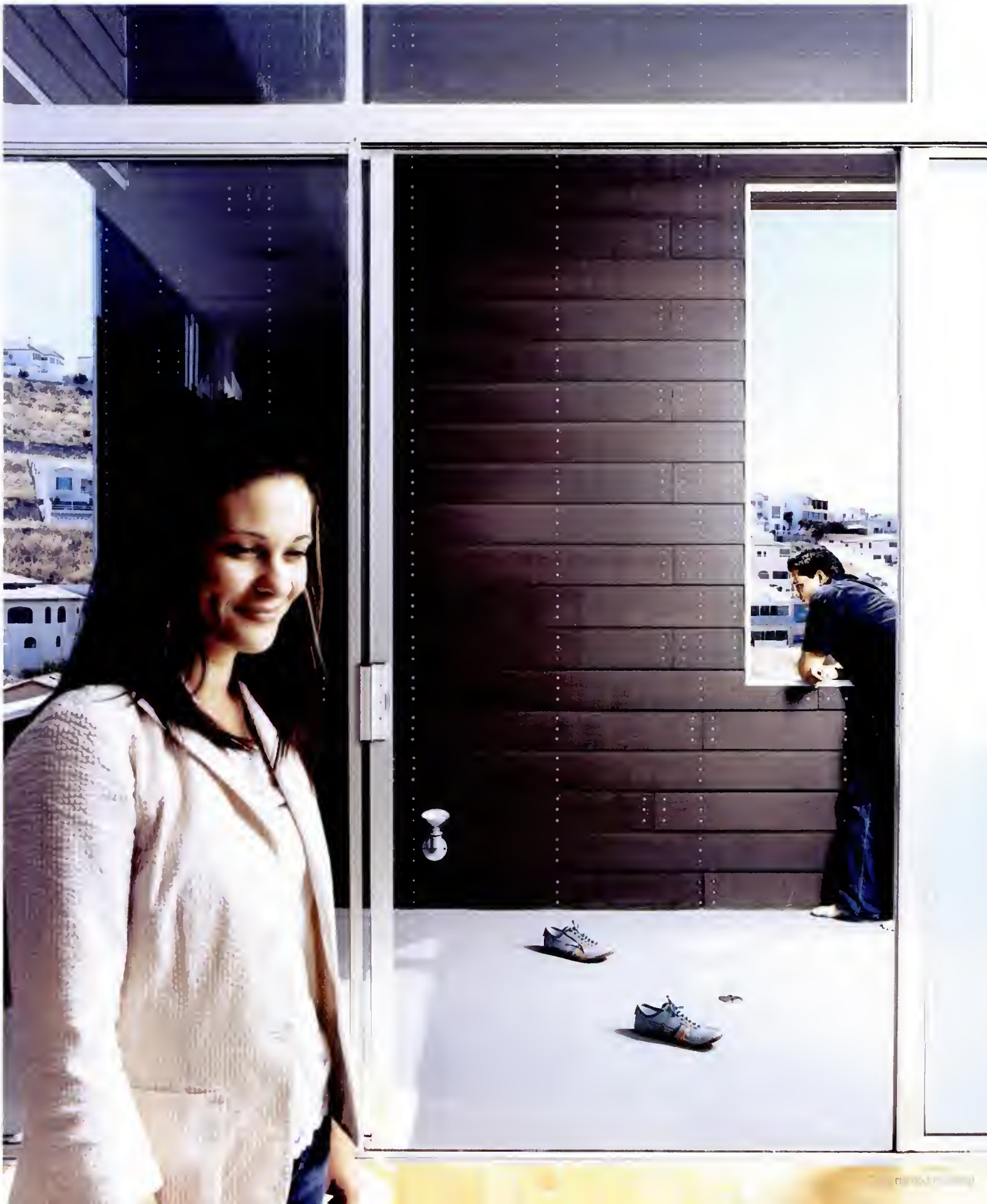
To this effect, each structure has windows on all sides—to the south, the city; to the north, the immediate neighborhood; and to the east and west, the Gracias' home itself. Long and lean decks punch their way from the front and back of the house. Walking through the home, you are constantly reminded of the push and pull of Tijuana's unique place in the world.

Paola and Jorge's bedroom occupies the second story of the redwood structure while Max's room settles neatly into the panel-clad unit. To gain extra space for an office and maid's quarters, Jorge excavated the land rather than build a third story. The downstairs now provides living space for their live-in maid and, just recently, a particularly spectacular, if not especially large, office for Jorge's growing practice. "Since my son was born, that really finalized my decision," Jorge says. "Not only did I want to commit myself to Tijuana but to my house and family." So, across the gravel courtyard from the maid's quarters, Gracia put up four plates of glass around the steel girders that support the vinyl-clad structure, a surprisingly simple but striking solution.

With the office open to the backyard, Rusky and Kata tussle with one another while keeping a watchful eye on Jorge as he lays out plans for his upcoming projects—projects that have become much more frequent since his coming-out party for Tijuana's arts scene just over a year ago. Sliding open the glass doors, Jorge basks in the city around him and wonders what the future holds for his hometown. As Paola and Max prepare a meal just upstairs, one thing's for sure: A traditional lunch is not far away. And with another energetic young architect staying put in Tijuana, the dream of the city as more than just a hodgepodge of tattered buildings strung together along makeshift streets is a little closer to reality. ■

Hardwood floors throughout provide continuity from the living space (above left) to the sleeping quarters. The entryway staircase divides the two structures.

The master bathroom (left) has its own open-air patio that faces the street. Another open-air patio (opposite), just off the master-bedroom, is a perfect spot for Jorge and Paola to take in the views of the surrounding neighborhood.



Project: Phelps/Burke Residence
Designer: Mayer Sattler-Smith
Location: Anchorage, Alaska

Alaska: The Final (Architectural) Frontier

"I always wanted to live in a glass house," explains Valerie Phelps, as she stands surrounded by the 40 feet of floor-to-ceiling windows that are the only walls of her living room. Laid out in a 270-degree panorama in front of her is the frosty expanse of Cook Inlet, cascading rocky mountains, and a white sun as big as a dinner plate. It's 10:30 at night and the sun is stuck in high-noon position. "I mean," Phelps pauses, her wineglass refracting specks of light throughout the room, "how could you not want look at this view all day?"

Ah, summertime in Alaska. When 70-pound cabbages spring up within weeks of newly thawed ground, spawning red salmon stuff every river, and the sun spins like an unbalanced toy top in the western sky—always circling but never setting. "It's the mysticism of this land, it gets in your blood," explains Phelps, squinting in the midnight sun, "then you never want to leave."

Phelps isn't alone. For hundreds of years, drifters, dreamers, and pioneers have been pulled to make their homes on Alaska's icy shores. We know their stories from literary anthologies, PBS documentaries, and Jon Krakauer best sellers, their tales of adventure and finding God on the frozen tundra of an empty land. But what most of us don't know is that the majority of Alaskans couldn't give a hoot about wintry vistas and northern lights—they moved here for the money.

Russian fur traders first came here in the late 1700s to harvest the seemingly endless sea-otter population; a hundred years later, gold miners came seeking easy fortune in the Klondike. But what has defined the industrial, cultural, and physical nature of Alaska more than any other period was the oil boom of the 1980s. During this time, Alaskans became the richest per capita population in the U.S. Thousands of emigrants poured into Anchorage—the state's urban center—and soon turned the Podunk downtown into a snowy Dallas, replete with mirrored office buildings, ritzy malls, mechanical bulls, and cowboy-boot-wearing businessmen.

As the oil wave subsided in the late '90s, the once-bustling downtown of Anchorage again transformed, this time into a kind of postmodern ghost town—a maze of empty sidewalks, broken windows covered by ▸

Though the Cook Inlet is nearby, from the street, the house's simple facade (page 196) gives little indication of the sights that await a visitor. Once inside, the whole house opens up to its surroundings with floor-to-ceiling windows (opposite and above) that are perfect for nature gazing. Valerie Phelps and Peter Burke's immediate backyard frequently plays host to moose and other wildlife in search of an afternoon snack.

plywood, and tourists shops selling moose-turd earrings.

"I don't see what Anchorage lacks," says Petra Sattler-Smith, co-partner of the Anchorage design company Mayer Sattler-Smith. "I see what potential it has." Inspired by the architectural "blank slate" of the city, Sattler-Smith and Klaus Mayer—who are both from Germany and had both worked for M Mense Architects in Anchorage—set up shop in 2001. Though their beginnings in the tiny cottage office across from a parking lot were humble, their mission was ambitious: to modernize what could be American architecture's last frontier. "Consider that the first shack in Anchorage was built in 1915—there's no real architectural history, no story, here," Sattler-Smith explains. "We want to help shape it."

Mayer Sattler-Smith's first residential project was building a house for Valerie Phelps and Peter Burke, for whom they had previously built a physical therapy clinic in 2001. "Their program was simple: Valerie wanted to live in a glass house; Peter wanted to live in a house of shipping containers," Sattler-Smith explains. "We just worked up from that."

The program called for a series of large rectangular "containers" to be positioned on top of and perpendicular to one another, with the south- and west-facing walls cut out to provide maximum sun exposure and panoramic views of Cook Inlet. Though the actual design for the Phelps/Burke house came relatively easily, construction did not. "In Alaska, there is a very small window of time to build," explains Phelps, who is a physical therapist and author. "Either it's summertime and people are too busy fishing, or it's wintertime and people are too busy freezing. You need to find them somewhere in between." After two years of—literally—brick-by-brick construction, Phelps and Burke moved into their house in September 2004.

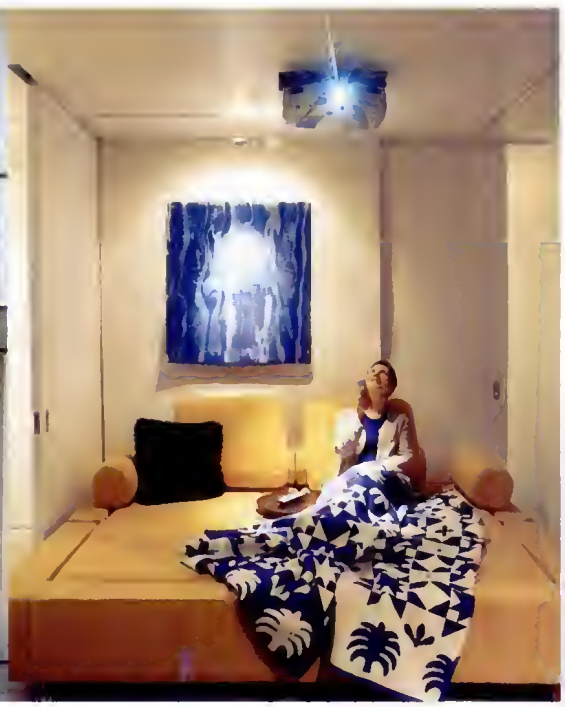
Fifteen miles down the only freeway south of Anchorage and a few miles along a twisting rocky road, the Phelps/Burke house sits 750 feet up the face of a steep mountain. Here, even in Alaska's most populous city, few houses cover the huge tree-lined swath of land south of Turnagain Arm. This is urban for this state, considering that if San Francisco were populated to the same density of Alaska, less than 55 people would live there.

Sitting at the end of a dirt driveway and surrounded by mounds of rocks and leafless shrubs, the plain steel siding and faceless garage façade of the Phelps/Burke residence resemble more a utilities kiosk in a public park than a sweeping modernist home. There is no house number, no welcome mat, not even a front door. "That was completely intentional," explains Peter Burke as he emerges from the yard below. "We're not really concerned with presentation from the street level—we saved the scenery for the back."

From the side view, the open windows and lack of curvature make the house appear somewhere between a Southern California Case Study House and an Eastern European communist office block, a jumble of right corners tightly interlocked like a winning row of Tetris. ▸

The floor-to-ceiling windows in the living room (opposite) give the impression of being outside even while cozily enjoying a cup of tea inside. All the windows in the house are double-paned and filled with argon gas. Petra Sattler-Smith says that "even when it's 10 below you can put your hand on them and they are still warm." Hydronic radiant heating embedded within the concrete floors not only enables barefoot walking during the coldest winter months but also warms the furniture and everything else in the room.

Sattler-Smith explains that "the north side of the house (below) is covered with corrugated galvanized steel and pierced with only a few very small windows; this protects from the 100-mile-per-hour north winds."



Burke (above) demonstrates the sliding doors that open to the couple's garage. Phelps (above, center) enjoys the master bedroom while Burke takes in the plentiful light afforded throughout the space (above, right).

Burke and Phelps requested that they each have their own private workspace. While Phelps's office (opposite) is on the first floor at the north end of the house, Burke's office is a seperate two-story space at the south end.

"We keep a basket of sunglasses by the door," Burke comments as he leads me inside. "You'll need some—it'll be bright like this until 11 or so tonight."

He's right. Even with sunglasses on, I can't help but squint at the sunlight blasting through the huge living-room windows. Though this room is only 480 square feet, it feels much bigger due to the fact that the area between the living room and porch is unencumbered by walls or furniture, an effect that brings the outside in and magnifies the dimension of both. "We wanted a kind of 'infinity pool' effect," explains Burke, pointing out the barely visible cable rails that run along the walkway. Because the second story juts obtrusively from a steep hill, the ground below is absent, leaving only a wide breadth of sea, sky, and mountains in the view. "You see," Burke says with a smile, "it's like we're just floating here."

To further open up the living room, Mayer Sattler-Smith put the kitchen and dining table directly behind the couch, devoid of any seperations. "Since we spend so much of our time in the kitchen cooking, or eating, we wanted both these spaces to have the best view in the house," explains Burke. The couple even contemplated putting their bed in the kitchen/dining/living space. "But we didn't want to create too much clutter," Phelps explains, "so we moved all that stuff downstairs."

Wall-size windows, breezy open spaces, concrete floors—it all sounds delicious during the Southern California–warm Alaskan summers. But alas, we are 3,000 miles from Malibu, and one wonders how a house of such apparent airiness might fair in the seven months of subzero Alaskan winter.

Because the sun rises and falls in just a couple hours in the south during wintertime, Mayer Sattler-Smith opened the south end of the house to maximize what little sunshine there is in the darkest winter hours. Phelps expands, "We can sit here, watch the snow and blue light fade in and out, and be in it without leaving the couch." And without all the frostbite and hypothermia.

I am driving back to downtown Anchorage and it is now 11:30 at night. It's bright, I put on my sunglasses, and like clockwork that infamous Corey Hart song comes on the radio again. To the left of Cook Inlet, the sun has just touched the mountains and is starting its bounce back northeast; to the right, red clouds frame fluorescent-green foliage into which bald eagles fly—it's a scene so excessively natural as if to appear unnatural, like a computer screensaver from a *Star Trek* episode with the contrast jacked up 200 percent. I am hungry for another reindeer dog and Klondike bar. There's an electric charge in the air that I have felt nowhere else in my life. I start to get it.

"This land, it is a fantastic, natural place," explains Klaus Mayer, when I talk to him later on the phone. "It needs structures that respond to this amazing environment, that articulate this area. That doesn't exist here yet—and that is the great challenge for us to work on."

If Alaska is indeed architecture's last frontier, then these must be its first pioneers. ■

Story by Sam Grawe

Photos by Eric Laignel

Community of Vision

A mere eight miles from Mount Vernon, George Washington's Georgian neoclassical plantation home, and just nine miles south of Old Town Alexandria, the colonial bastion that provides much inspiration for Northern Virginia's epidemic of multimillion-dollar neo-colonial McMansions, sits Hollin Hills, one of the country's most progressive housing developments.

Originally constructed in 1970, the Wilson residence was updated by the architect couple in 2004. They expanded the home by about a third, but the original design of the rear elevation (seen here at dusk) was largely maintained.

Conceived by forward-thinking developer Robert Davenport in the 1940s and designed by architect Charles Goodman, the enclave of some 450 modernist homes is an anomaly not only in the greater Washington metropolitan area but in the whole country. Despite Hollin Hills' popularity among its residents and well-documented public acclaim, in the half century since its inception, it has inspired few imitators.

When architects Sally and Ken Wilson moved to a leafy cul-de-sac in Hollin Hills six years ago with their two sons, it was exactly the sort of place they had been looking for. "I lived here for six months when I was just out of school," says Ken. "I thought it was the coolest place, and, if we could afford to, I always wanted to come back." With a hint of nostalgia Sally adds, "It's a great neighborhood, with a fantastic community association. I never imagined doing that kind of stuff but the people are so cool, you want to."

It was the post–World War II housing boom that made Hollin Hills possible in both its physical and social form. Fueled by an expanding economy and boundless atomic age optimism, the American Dream of home ownership was now well within reach of a growing middle class. While in most instances the result was your average split-level, the left-leaning Goodman and Davenport envisioned for Americans a better life through enlightened modern design. It was precisely this dedication to a higher standard, and Davenport's long-standing involvement, which helped Hollin Hills evolve into such a lasting and solid community.

Sometime in the late 1940s, after securing initial investments from a group of liberal veterans known as the American Veterans Committee, some of whom were the neighborhood's first residents, Davenport and ▸

Project: Wilson Residence
Architect: Charles Goodman (1970)
Renovation: Sally and Ken Wilson (2004)
Location: Alexandria, Virginia

PHOTO BY ROBERT LAUTMAN (PORTRAIT AND HISTORICAL IMAGES)

Goodman set about creating a site plan for the 225 lush rolling acres that would reflect the pair's progressive ethos. These overarching decisions, so unique considering today's zoned, coded, and mandated suburbia, are the foundation of the special character Hollin Hills exudes. Houses were situated on slopes and at angles that afforded maximum privacy and respected natural drainage patterns and flora. Meandering roads followed the contours of the land, abandoning both the standardized grid and sidewalks, too. Parks and trails were established along the small streams that border the property. Even a benign set of rules, such as the banning of fences between properties, further extended the pastoral setting and fostered a shared community atmosphere. "It really stands apart from what you would expect to find in D.C.," Sally comments. "It's a 35-minute commute from downtown, but I feel like I'm in a vacation house."

When it came to designing and building the homes, Davenport and Goodman took a similarly dynamic approach. Over the course of the community's roughly 20-year development, the team offered prospective buyers nine different housing types, each with numerous variations depending on scale, siting, materials, and the needs of the homeowners. They set up their own shop where the team of builders constructed 12-foot-long wall panels, which were then trucked to the site and assembled into place—a sort of onsite prefabrication. (Goodman would later consult for National Homes, the country's largest prefabricated housing manufacturer.) To maximize the views created, and introduce a symbiotic relationship with the outdoors, all of the houses featured large expanses of windows (as much as 28 and a half feet of floor-to-ceiling glass in some models).

Brick, perhaps the only concession to colonialism, ▸

Charles Goodman in his Washington, D.C. office during the 1950s (opposite). The Wilson's living and dining rooms (below) are outfitted with furniture from B&B Italia, Fritz Hansen, Modernica, and Knoll.
p. 262

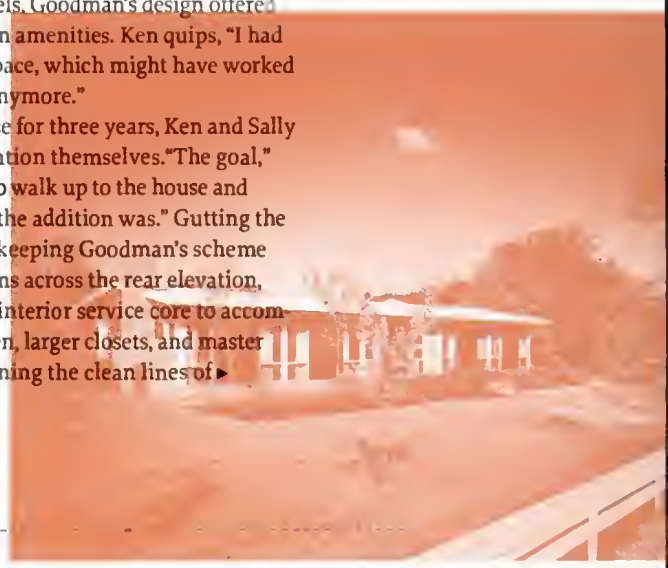
The light-filled foyer was part of Goodman's original design for Unit House No. 6, upon which the Wilson's model is based. During the 2004 renovation the Wilsons replaced the plywood siding with cedar (opposite), and used reclaimed brick to maintain the home's classic appearance.

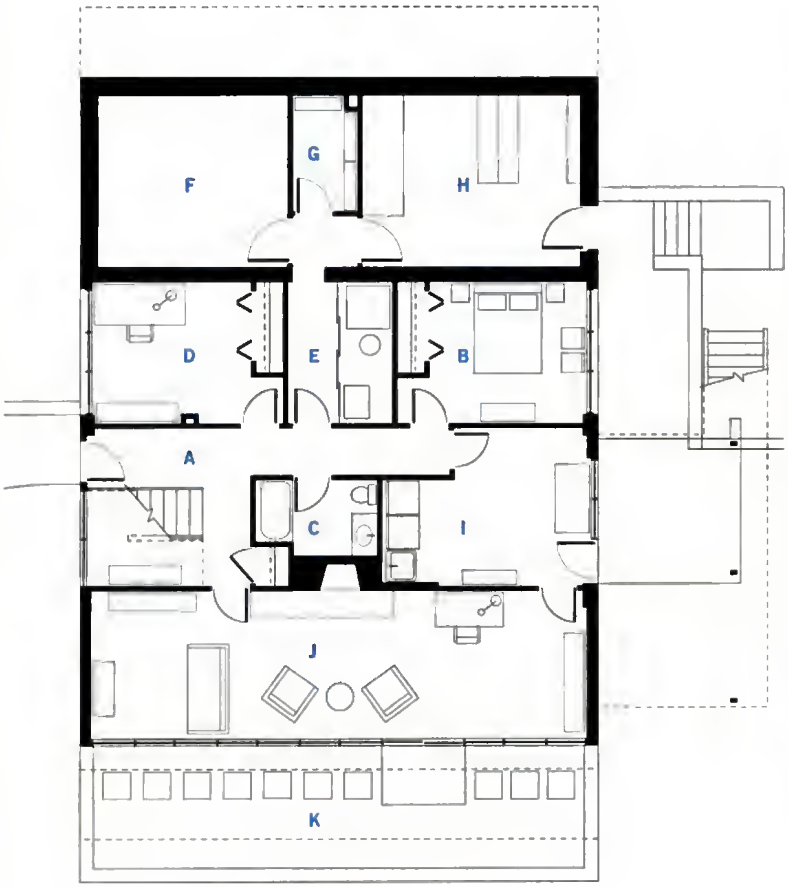
was recycled from decaying Baltimore warehouses and formed much of the houses' interior and exterior massing. Of the relationship between these materials, architect Paul Rudolph noted in a 1961 *Life* magazine article that "the contrast between the solidity of the brick and the openness of the glass makes an admirable compromise between the cave and the goldfish bowl."

Many of the early Hollin Hills designs featured standard pitched roofs atypical of mid-century modernism; however, later models introduced a graceful inverted butterfly roof and also a completely flat roof that could still stand up to Virginia's thunderstorms and winter. In most of the homes, a large open-plan living and dining area was separated from the bedrooms by a service core made up of the kitchen and bathrooms. Through the adaptable and modular designs, Hollin Hills operated as a larger-than-life petri dish in which Goodman could experiment with evolving architectural concepts, and continually refine his practice.

Although the Wilsons' house was one of the last to be completed, in 1970, and was much grander in scale than the original postwar models, Goodman's design offered little in the way of modern amenities. Ken quips, "I had about four feet of closet space, which might have worked in 1950, but just doesn't anymore."

After living in the house for three years, Ken and Sally decided to tackle a renovation themselves. "The goal," says Ken, "was to be able to walk up to the house and not be able to find where the addition was." Gutting the rear of the structure, but keeping Goodman's scheme for a row of three bedrooms across the rear elevation, the couple expanded the interior service core to accommodate an updated kitchen, larger closets, and master bathroom, while maintaining the clean lines of ▸





Lower-Level Floor Plan

A Entry
B Bedroom
C Bathroom
D Office
E Utility
F Exercise Room
G Wine Closet
H Storage
I Laundry Room
J Family Room
K Gravel Trench

■ Renovated Floor Plan
Original 1970 Floor Plan

Upper-Level Floor Plan

L Master Bedroom
M Master Bathroom
N Master Closet
O Pantry
P Kitchen
Q Dining
R Living

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the clerestory and trim on the exterior. Taking a cue from Ken's Washington, D.C.–based practice, Envision (which has designed environmentally responsible offices for the U.S. headquarters of Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund, and the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) project in D.C.), the Wilsons went to great lengths to use sustainable materials and pay close attention to energy efficiency. "We used copper plumbing instead of PVC, zero-VOC paints, insulated glass, bamboo and sustainably harvested wood, increased the roof rafter size to allow more insulation, made the walls thicker, and put in a mechanical system that is three times more efficient," says Ken. Through-out the home, all of the new cabinetry employs a formal-dehyde-free wheat board made from agricultural wheat straw waste. The couple even went so far as to get reclaimed brick from Baltimore, just as in the original homes—"but now it costs three times as much because of the labor involved in taking old mortar off the bricks," Ken says. Although the house is now a third larger, the energy costs are remarkably reduced.

The Wilsons' seamless 21st-century renovation shows that Hollin Hills still has much to offer the next gen-eration of American housing. In 1957, at the American Institute of Architects' Centennial Exhibition at the National Gallery of Art, Hollin Hills was chosen as one of "Ten milestones in the future of America's architecture." Undoubtedly, the future envisioned then is far different from what exists today, but it's still fair to say that the development represents a milestone—a neighborhood that can boast not only an original vision but the ability to live up to it. ■

Jens Risom's 1941 lounge chair for Knoll sits alongside custom-made cabinets in the Wilson's master bedroom. Ken's father, an archeologist, collected the pottery and wall hanging in the American southwest.

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Photos by Grant Scott

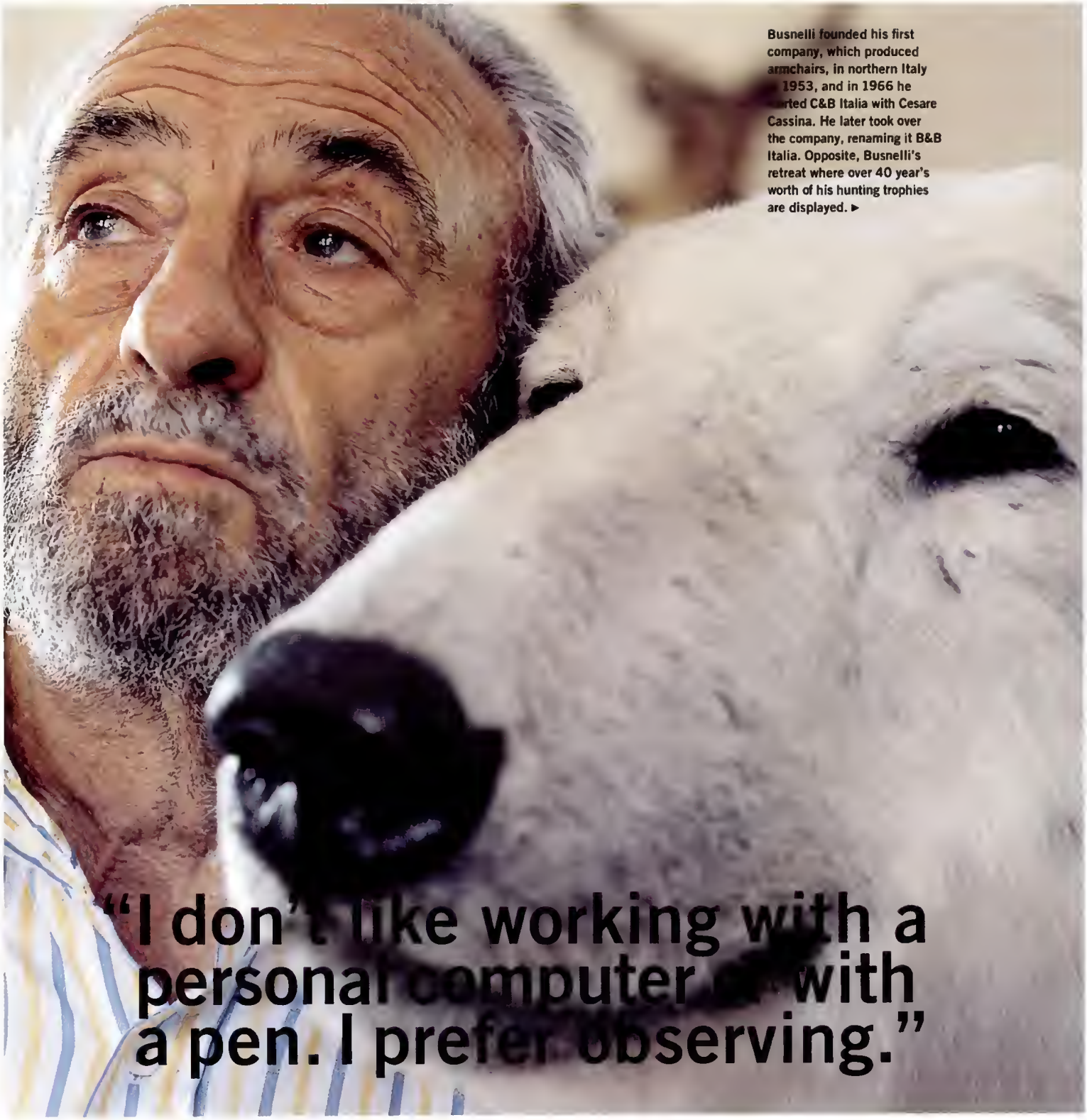
Home Is Where the Design Is

In Grant Scott and Samantha Scott-Jeffries' new book *At Home with the Makers of Style*, we get to sneak a peek inside the homes of some of the world's key contemporary designers. Readers will discover that Piero Busnelli is as obsessed with hunting as he is with design and that Dieter Rams starts each day with a swim and a blast of Miles Davis. We also learn whether or not these designers practice the design philosophies they preach: Does Rams, for example, "eliminate the unimportant"? See for yourself...

"The foundation of design is for us the question of context."

Brothers Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec have been working together in their workshop hidden next to a car repair shop in a northern suburb of Paris since 1999. This is their desk, with a sketch of their "Bells" lamp, and the requisite ashtray. ▶

Piero Busnelli



Busnelli founded his first company, which produced armchairs, in northern Italy in 1953, and in 1966 he started C&B Italia with Cesare Cassina. He later took over the company, renaming it B&B Italia. Opposite, Busnelli's retreat where over 40 year's worth of his hunting trophies are displayed. ►

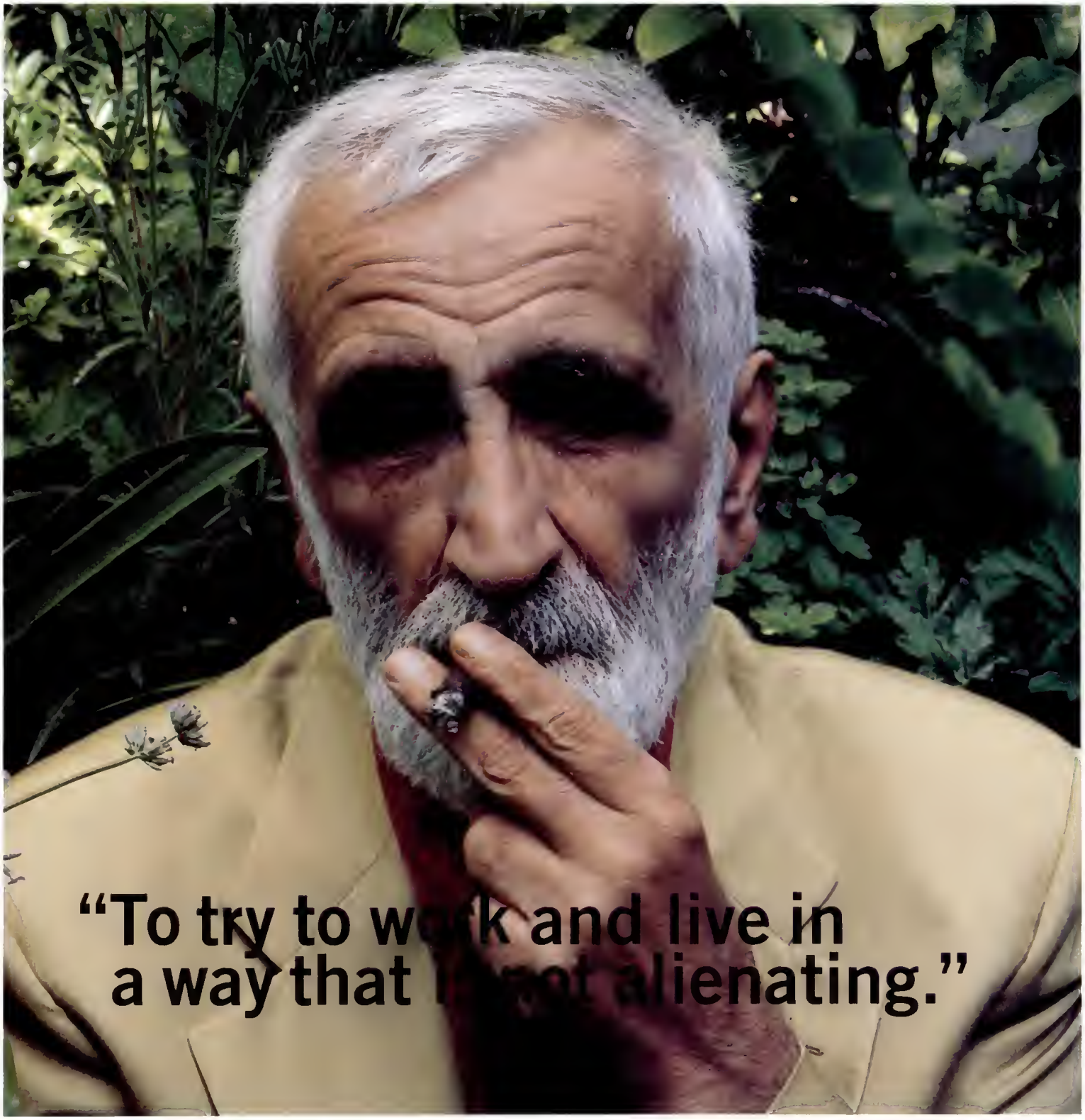
"I don't like working with a personal computer with a pen. I prefer observing."

Matali Crasset

The Joan-of-Arc coiffed designer studied at the Ateliers ENSCI in Paris, spent five years working with Philippe Starck, and then in 1998, set up her own design studio. Her workspace is shown here. ▶

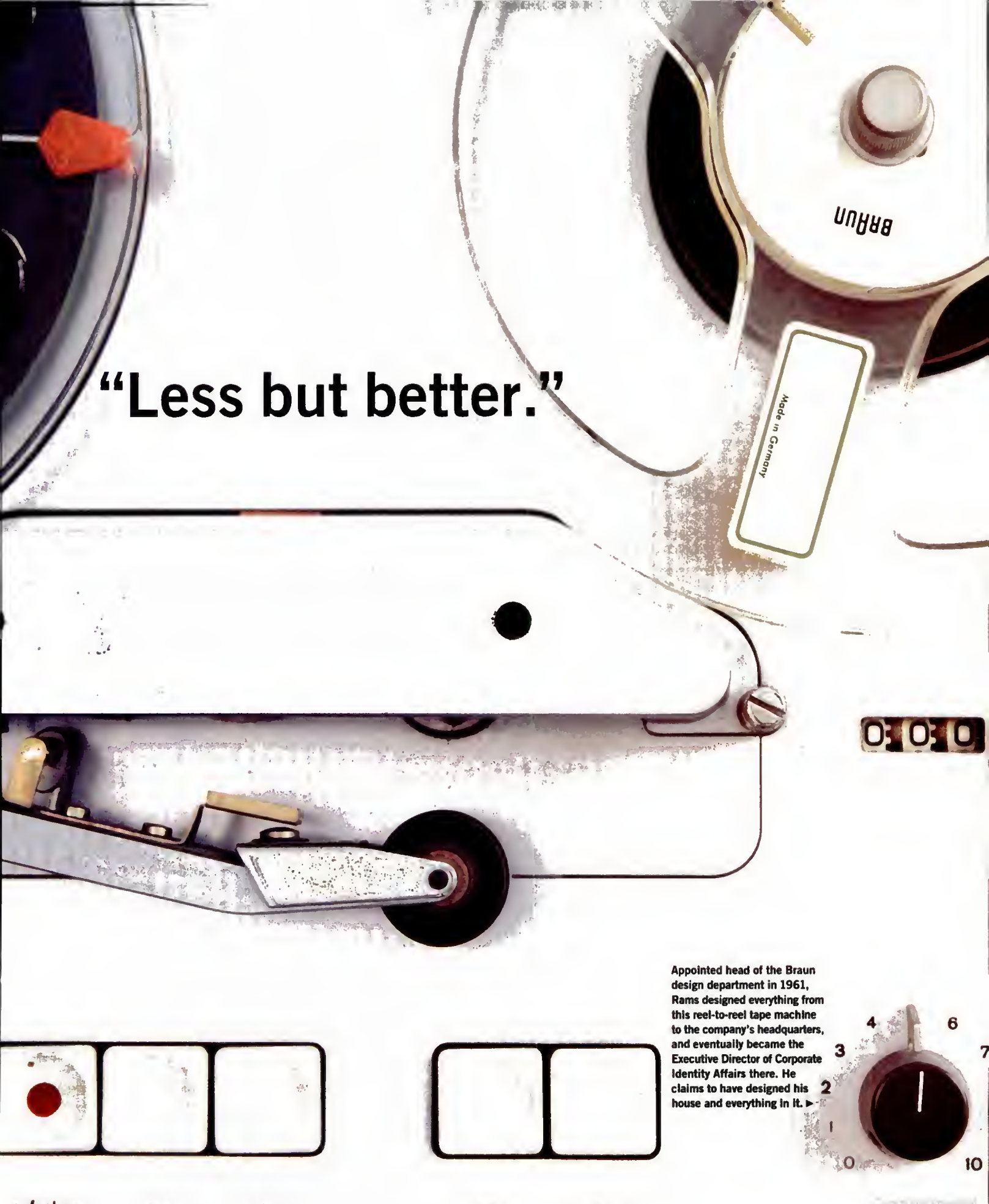
"I am like other people. I eat three times a day, I sleep. I play with the children. I am also perhaps a workaholic"

Enzo Mari



Mari studied fine arts in Milan before turning his attention to design in the late 1950s. He has created furniture and objects for over 1,700 clients including Driade, Olivetti, Artemide, Zanotta, and Muji. Below, a detail of the shelving next to his desk, in his central Milan office. ▶

Dieter Rams



"Less but better."

Appointed head of the Braun design department in 1961, Rams designed everything from this reel-to-reel tape machine to the company's headquarters, and eventually became the Executive Director of Corporate Identity Affairs there. He claims to have designed his house and everything in it. ▶

Gitta Gschwendtner

A collector of second-hand electric irons, shoes, and handbags, Gschwendtner has designed everything from chairs to egg cups since her graduation from London's Royal College of Art. ▶

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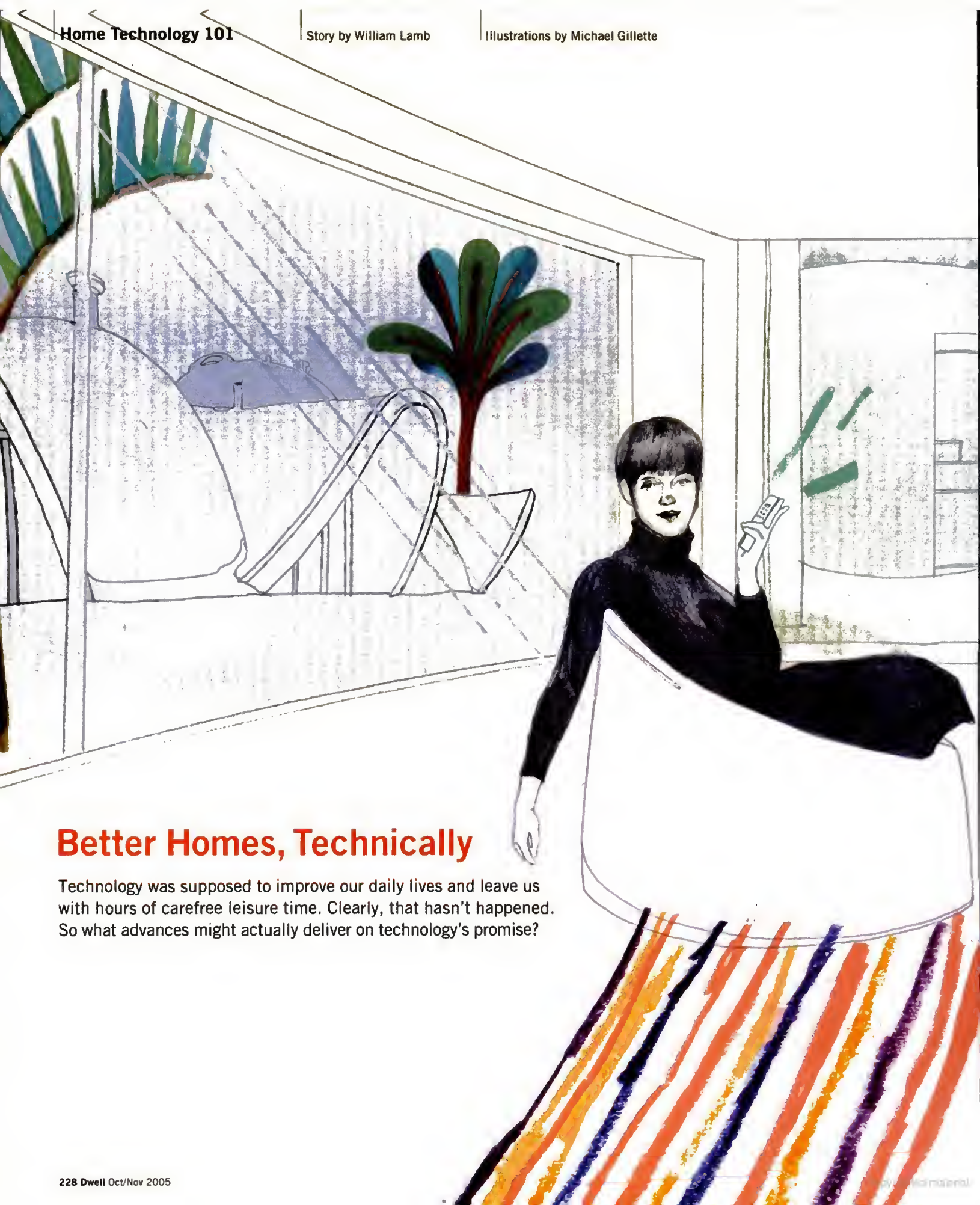
Story by William Lamb

Illustrations by Michael Gillette



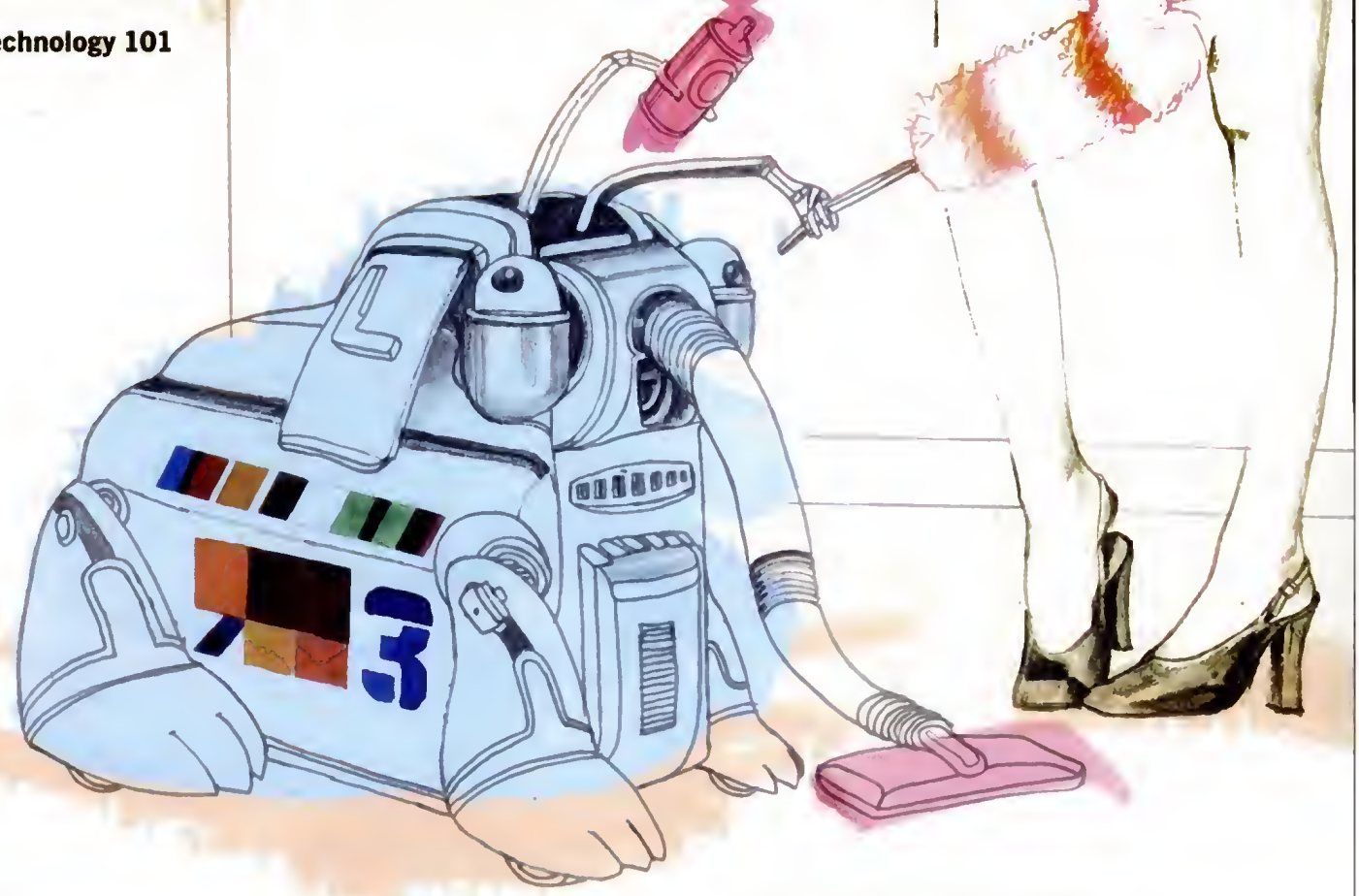
Better Homes, Technically

Technology was supposed to improve our daily lives and leave us with hours of carefree leisure time. Clearly, that hasn't happened. So what advances might actually deliver on technology's promise?

When I was in the first grade, our teacher, Miss Street, gave us an assignment: draw a car as we imagined it would appear in the year 2000. There were about 20 students in that class and, as I remember it, not a single one of us drew a vehicle with wheels. It was simply understood that by 2000—a year that seemed impossibly far away to a gaggle of 6-year-olds—we'd all be zipping around in bubble-domed flying cars.

Now that we're safely into the first decade of the new millennium, it's as good a time as any to take stock of how well technology has managed to keep pace with our expectations for life in the 21st century. True, we're still waiting for those flying cars (a personal jetpack would be nice, too), but it is possible to make a phone call from the middle of a Nebraska cornfield or instantly retrieve obscure facts and figures from the Internet while sipping a latté at your corner cafe. Not bad.

However, an informal survey of customers at a Best Buy in the suburbs of St. Louis, Missouri, suggests that the electronics industry will have to work harder if it's going to deliver the sort of futuristic utopia that 60 years of science-fiction films have conditioned us to expect. What do consumers think? MP3 players and giant plasma screens are great, but when will someone invent a machine that can produce a hot meal out of thin air? How soon will teleportation technology make airplanes obsolete? And what about those personal jetpacks? A sampling of responses follows. ▶



Robin Wilson
47, is a massage therapist and aspiring computer technician from University City, Missouri.
She bought: A television set with a built-in DVD player and a DVD copy of *East of Eden*, starring James Dean.
An electronic invention that simplified her life: The Internet. "Being able to get information in a second is very important to me," she says.
A new invention that would improve her life: "A food replicator," she says. "Whatever I wanted, I would press a button and the food would be there. And it would always be healthy, none of this preserved crap." Her first request, she says, will be French vanilla ice cream with strawberries.

Chad Hester
27, works in sales in St. Louis.
He bought: CDs by the Starting Line and MXPX.
An electronic innovation that simplified his life: TiVo. "I cannot live without it," he says. "It's ridiculous."
A new invention that would improve his life: "Teleportation," Hester says. "I need that. I hate driving." The ability to instantly teleport himself anywhere would allow him to sleep later, he reasons, and save time and money when vacationing.

Tom Hisey
27, is a photographer from St. Louis.
He bought: A wireless keyboard and mouse for his computer.
An electronic innovation that simplified his life: His computer.
A new invention that would improve his life: "I would like my entire wall to be a TV," he says. "There's nothing better than playing video games with life-sized characters."

Quinton Campbell
26, is a bookstore employee from St. Louis.
He bought: A *Die Hard* DVD box set.
An electronic innovation that simplified his life: His iPod.
A new invention that would improve his life: "I would like a DVD player that's basically like my iPod," he says, "where whatever movie I felt like watching at that time, I could cue it up without having to go to the video store."

Jordan Ault
23, is a law student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
He bought: A Mag Innovision 17-inch flat-screen computer monitor to give to his girlfriend as an anniversary gift.
An electronic innovation that simplified his life: A wireless navigation system for his laptop computer. "I can use my computer anywhere in my house," he says. "I'm much more productive now."
A new invention that would improve his life: "I would like software where I could speak and the computer would type it out," he says. "I know it exists, but I want some that actually works. I bought a program with a microphone, but it didn't really work out."

Toby Heigele
28, is a real-estate agent from St. Louis.
She bought: A Sony home theater system.
An electronic innovation that simplified her life: Her cell phone.
A new invention that would improve her life: "A robot to do all my household chores," she says. "Cleaning, laundry, vacuuming." Her only concern is that the machines would conspire to take over the world.

Sandy Naro
45, a paralegal from St. Louis.
She bought: DVDs, including season one of *Rescue Me* and the John Wayne Signature Collection box set.
An electronic invention that simplified her life: The remote control.
A new invention that would improve her life: Technology that would allow for online gasoline sales and automated, offsite fill-ups. "That way I'd never have to go to the gas station," she says. ▸

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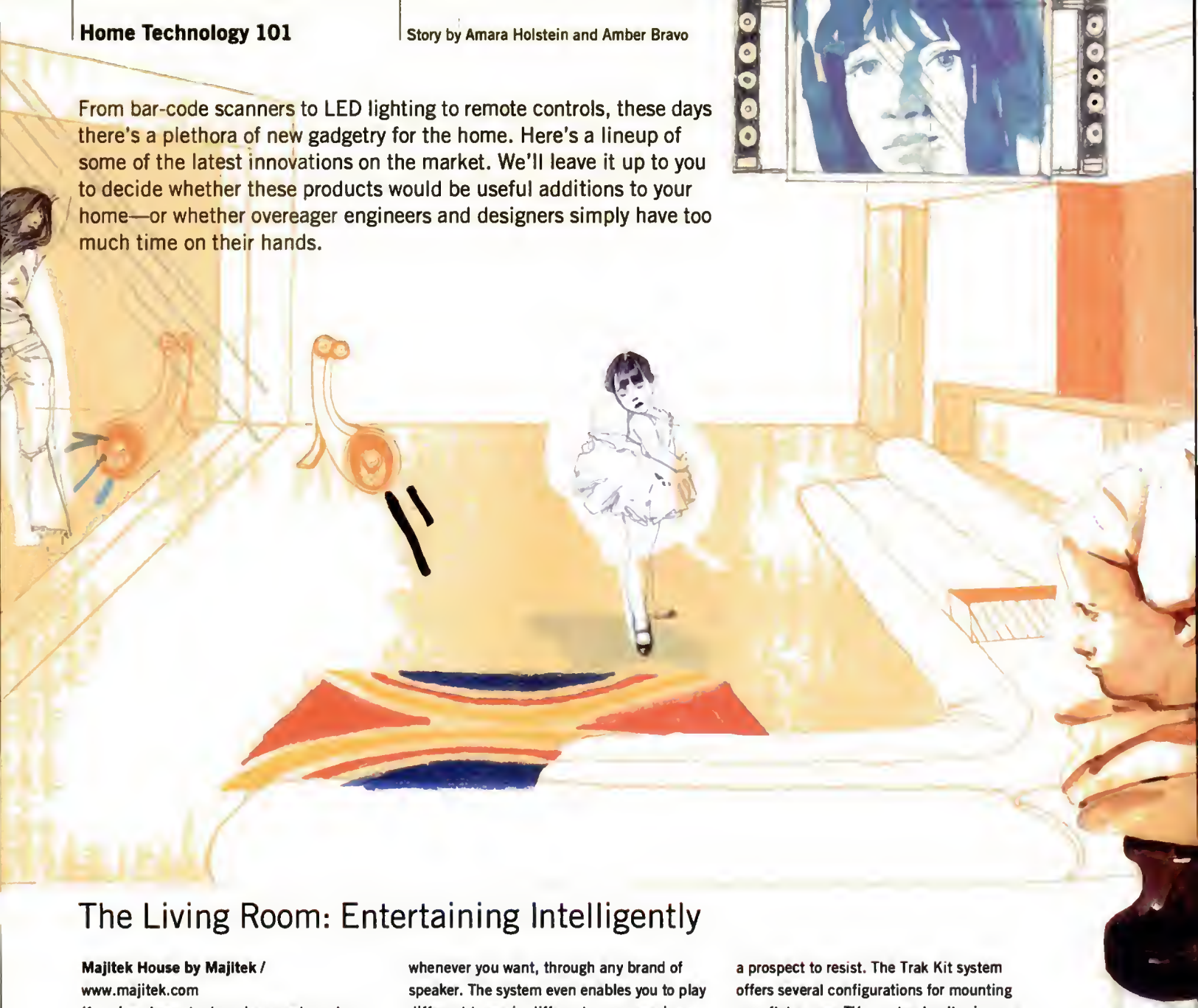
THERE'S MORE TO SEE

Story by Amara Holstein and Amber Bravo

From bar-code scanners to LED lighting to remote controls, these days there's a plethora of new gadgetry for the home. Here's a lineup of some of the latest innovations on the market. We'll leave it up to you to decide whether these products would be useful additions to your home—or whether overeager engineers and designers simply have too much time on their hands.



The Living Room: Entertaining Intelligently

Majitek House by Majitek /
www.majitek.com
If you've always harbored a secret crush on *2001: A Space Odyssey*'s HAL, you'll probably be similarly enamored with Maji, a computer framework that controls all of your home's electronic and technological components. Once you've decided what automatic functions you'd like your house to perform—a hearty personal greeting as you enter the front door, lights that automatically turn on and off when you move between rooms—you cede the reins to the mainframe.

Sonos Digital Music System /
www.sonos.com
Whether your living space spans two rooms or twenty, a single handset and several small Sonos ZonePlayers scattered about let you listen to your digital music wherever and whenever you want, through any brand of speaker. The system even enables you to play different tunes in different rooms, easing household musical discord.

Pilkington Activ by Pilkington /
www.pilkington.com
Finally, windows that make Windex obsolete are a clear possibility. Pilkington Activ windows feature ultrathin layers of titanium dioxide applied to molten glass; when UV rays make contact with the panes, any dirt on the surface breaks down. The windows are also hydrophilic—water sheets off the glass instead of beading—so even rainy days won't ruin your view.

Trak Kit / www.trak-kit.com
Any Netflix subscriber knows that the option of watching a movie in bed is too tantalizing a prospect to resist. The Trak Kit system offers several configurations for mounting your flat-screen TV on a track, allowing one set to serve a number of areas. It's also handy for small, multipurpose spaces; your screen can act as your computer monitor, or slide into a custom storage unit when not in use.

Smart Carpet by Vorwerk with Infineon /
www.vorwerk.com and www.infineon.com
We often wonder why a ten-minute chore involving a basic appliance needs to be redesigned and made exponentially more complex. Case in point: Smart Carpet, a floor covering in which tiny microchips are embedded; the chips help steer a custom-designed vacuuming robot over every surface inch. Neat, but we hate to think of the electrical mishaps possible should a cocktail-party guest spill his or her beverage. ▸

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The Bathroom: High-Tech Hygiene

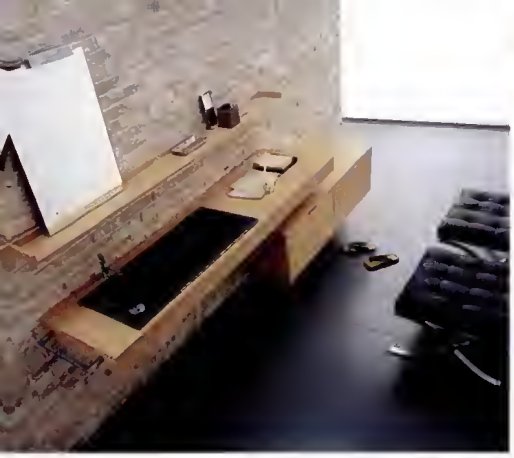
Swash by Brondell / www.brondell.com
Some people apparently strive for cleaner nether regions than current toilets and bidets can provide. For this hygiene-vigilant group, the Swash is a good solution. Among the toilet seat's many features are a temperature-adjustable warm-air dryer, various personal wash options, retractable cleansing wands, contoured germ-resistant plastic, a seat warmer, a remote control, and myriad personalized settings.

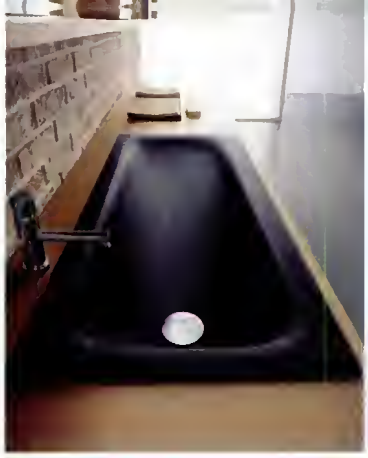
VIOlight / www.violight.com
We concede: We've often felt that our ratty old toothbrush might not be as clean as it could be. So we're fond of the VIOlight, a toothbrush sanitizer designed by Philippe Starck with counter appeal as well as practicality in mind. The VIOlight holds up to four toothbrushes, and the push of a button activates a germicidal UV light that kills up to 99.9% of the bacteria that may be living in your brushes' bristles.

Television mirror by Seura / www.seuratvmirror.com
Now Paula Zahn can follow you into the bathroom and inform you of the latest developments in Iraq while you're washing your face. Seúra's mirror features a Sharp LCD screen located at its bottom center, along with integrated speakers and a seamless design; the screen disappears when not in use. We thought the bathroom might be the last sacred space but apparently there's no escaping the media these days.

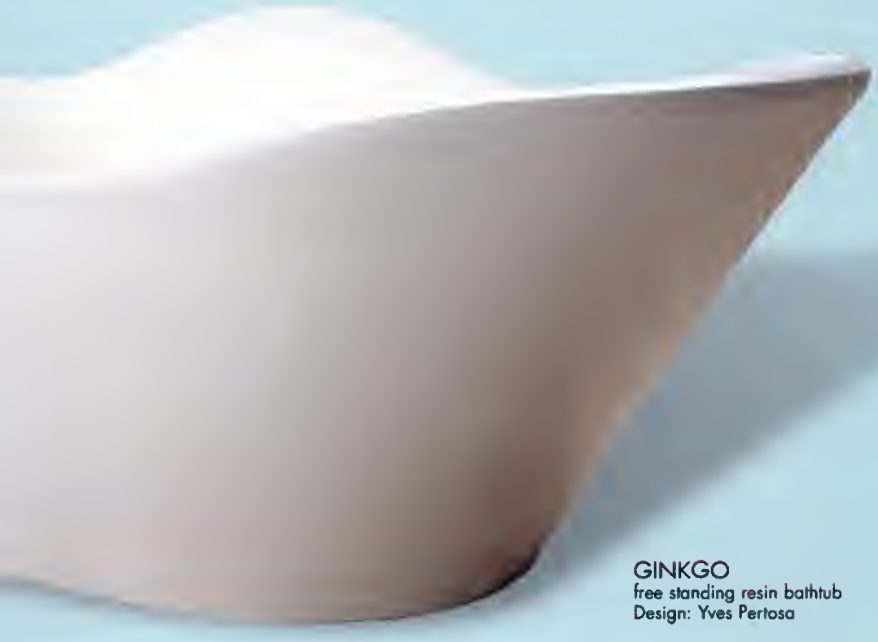
Smart Hydro by IHouse / www.ihouse.com.br
This tub lets you start your bath online or by phone—and then alerts you when the bath is fully drawn to your specific requirements of temperature, water level, and interior LED lighting levels. (Whether or not it knows if the tub is on the verge of overflowing is another matter.) Once immersed in water, seven jets massage your tired limbs. Even better, the tub drains and self-cleans with water and detergent after you step out. Though we publicly scoff at Smart Hydro's absurdity, we secretly yearn to come home to its watery embrace.

E-flow by Delta / deltacom.deltafaucet.com
Just like the fixtures found in airports and train stations, this hands-free faucet is operated by electronic motion sensors instead of handles or levers. Saves time, effort and uh, money on Comet cleanser, we reckon. ▸

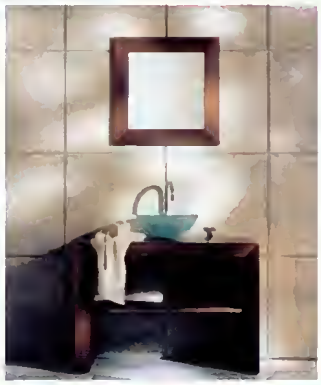


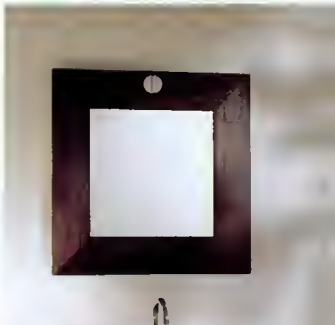


BATH ARCHITECTURE



GINKGO
free standing resin bathtub
Design: Yves Pertosa





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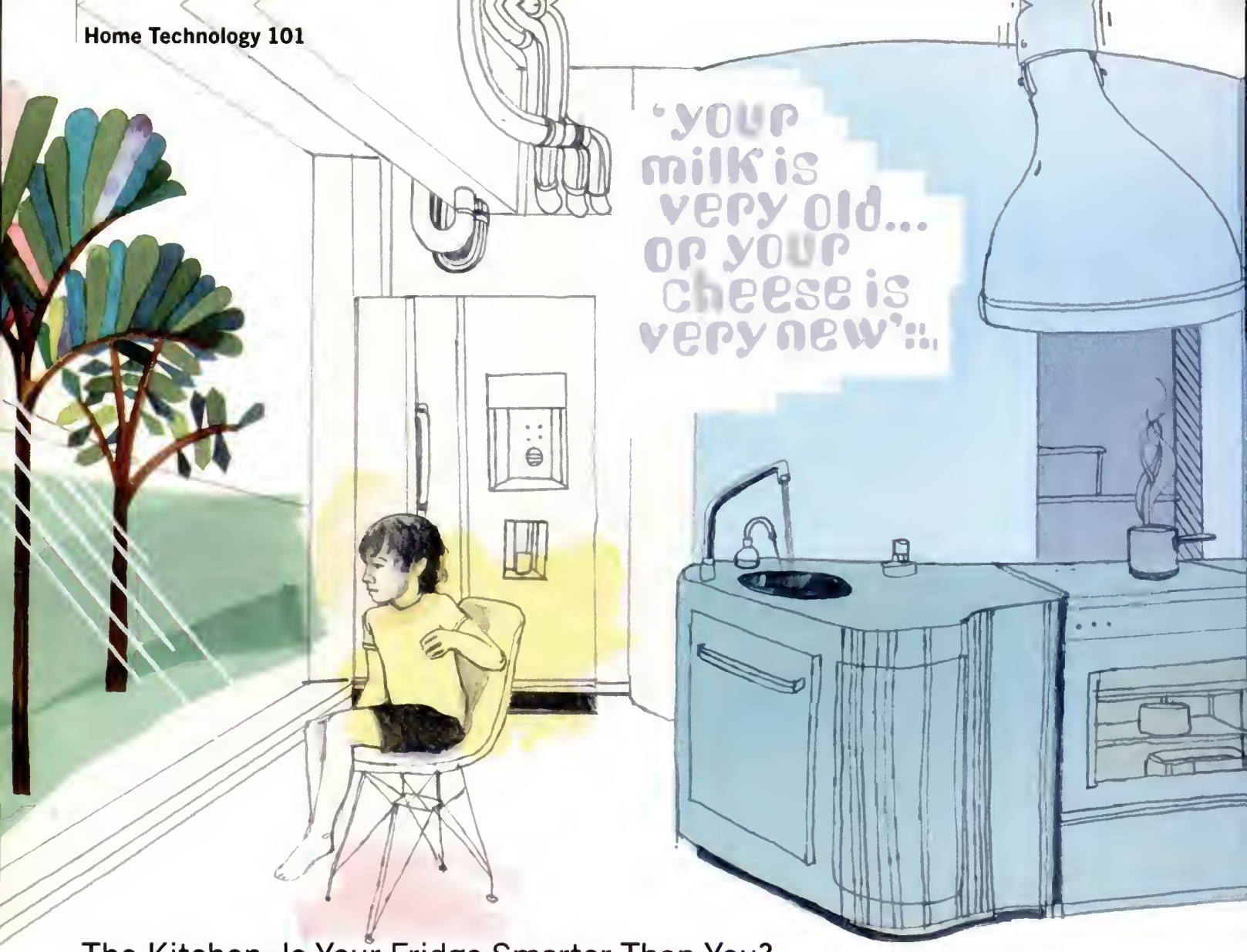

The Kitchen: Is Your Fridge Smarter Than You?

Ritual cooking island by Whirlpool / www.inkitchen.whirlpool.com
Whirlpool Global Consumer Design's concept project, Ritual, is an island unto itself: This fully integrated kitchen combines a range, sink, trash compactor, refrigerator, and eating area in one simple, curvilinear object, and includes flourishes like an induction Dutch oven that uses volcanic sand for cooking, an air-and-water–powered venting system, and a cooling area perfectly sized for a bottle of pinot gris.

Popcon fridge by Samsung / www.samsung.com
Samsung's new Popcon Refrigerator takes "keeping" your food to another level: It's outfitted with a television, food-management software (to let you know when your food starts to go bad), audio and text messaging, and digital temperature displays. The only thing the fridge will spoil is the simplicity of nourishing oneself.

Beyond Smart Microwave Oven and Bread Maker / www.beyondconnectedhome.com
There's more than just a price hidden in those seemingly benign black lines branded across most packaged goods. Harnessing the power of the bar code, Beyond Smart has developed both a microwave and a bread oven that will scan your prepackaged Hot Pockets and automatically adjust to the appropriate setting, obviating the need for basic literacy.

Remote controlled oven hood by Zephyr / www.zephyronline.com
Zephyr's new Elica collection, designed by David Lewis, offers a variety of sleek, minimal oven hoods that take the idea of air ventilation to the next level: remote access. This technological frippery is most likely geared towards the overbearing patrician who might get miffed when Jeeves sears a pork loin sans ventilation.

TMIO oven / www.tmio.com
The TMIO Intelligent Oven has both refrigerating and heating capabilities and can be accessed remotely by phone, PDA, or office computer, allowing you to prepare, store, and cook your food so that it's ready to eat the moment you walk through the door. After all, nothing says lovin' like callin' your oven but hopefully you won't get caught in rush hour traffic after programming the roast to finish cooking promptly at 7. ▸

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The Home Office: Working Outside of the Box

Mac Mini / www.apple.com
With the introduction of Mac Mini, we wondered if Apple had over-ripened, but upon closer inspection the scaled-down computer offers big benefits in a small package. The mini is barely larger than our 1981 Walkman and nothing short of amazing—it includes a 1.25 or 1.42 GHz G4 processor, 40 or 80 GB hard drive, graphics chip, DVD drive, a suite of sweet software, and a host of peripheral ports.

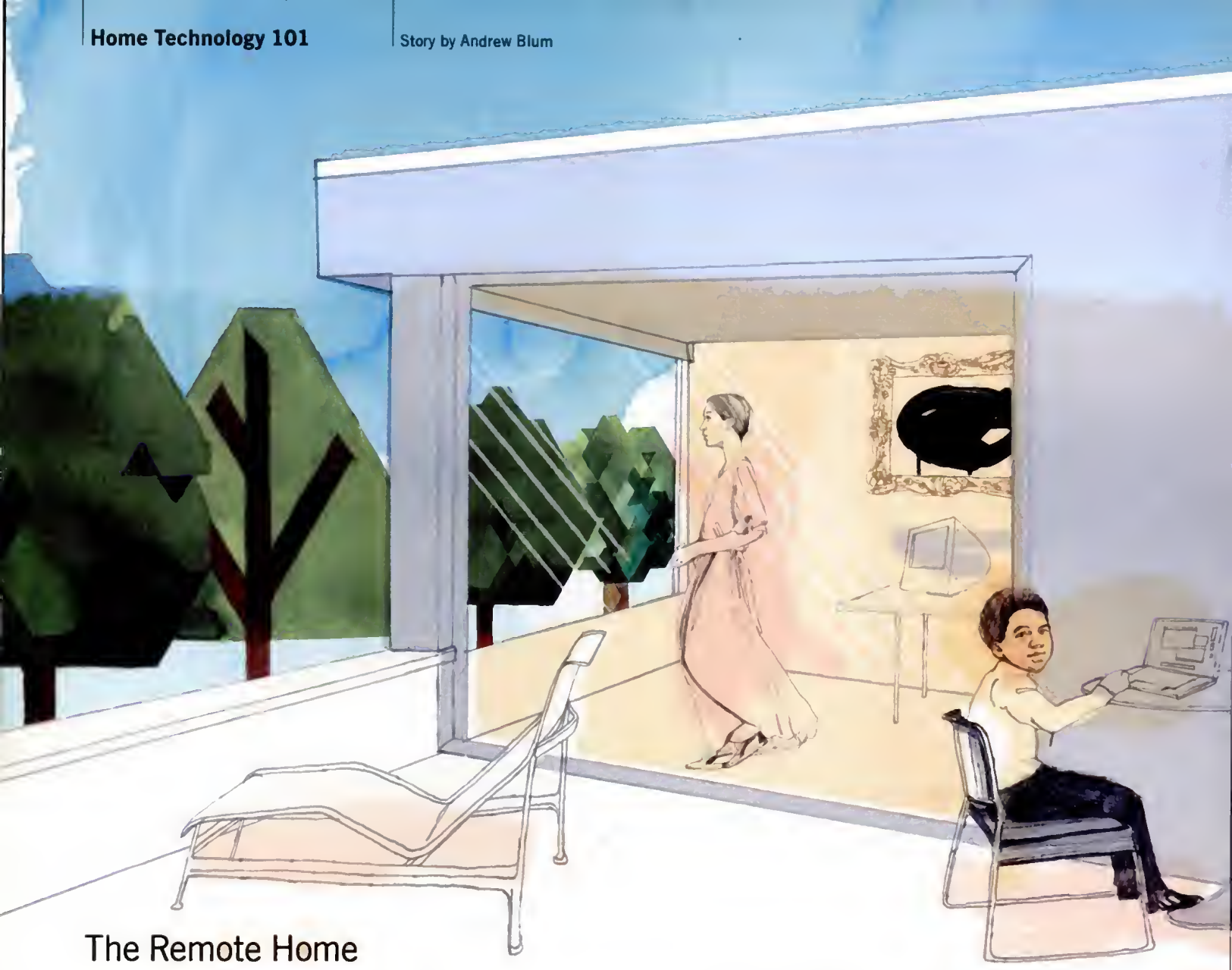
Solar Backpack by Voltaic Systems / www.voltaicsystems.com
The ubiquity of WiFi hot spots makes it possible to take your office on the road, and perhaps even outdoors. This backpack is outfitted with photovoltaic solar panels, allowing you to recharge necessities like cell phones, cameras, radios, PDAs, and, most important, iPods. The one glaring and perplexing exception—it won't charge your computer.

Handheld printer by PrintDreams / www.printdreams.com
Tired of writing in your journal by hand? Want to put that email on a "Martha's Vineyard at Night" postcard but left the printer in your car at Woods Hole? Never fear, the PrintBrush is here. Just like in the cartoons, where Heathcliff could render a full-color Mona Lisa with a single stroke of the brush, this little handheld device, when randomly swept over a blank surface, will print your desired file in black and white using patented Random Movement Printing Technology.

iH5 Alarm Clock / www.ihomeaudio.com
In order to produce good work, you have to get your rest; if you're one of the lucky few whose bed is in close proximity to your desk (or if you have no qualms nesting on office carpeting) this iPod integrative alarm clock will rouse you to everybody's favorite Loverboy tune, "Working for the Weekend."

iTech Virtual Keyboard / www.itechdynamic.com
The simplicity of the design is alluring; the performance, astonishing. This lightweight device allows you to project a virtual keyboard onto any flat surface, and connect it to a range of smart phones, handhelds, and notebook computers. What could be sleeker or more space-saving? Use it while camping, on the town, anywhere: The world is your keyboard. ▸

Story by Andrew Blum



The Remote Home

My girlfriend and I recently drove the entire length of Interstate 80, from San Francisco to New York. After a few nights spent in roadside motels, we stayed overnight with friends in Chicago and experienced the wonderful feeling of home. Arriving at their apartment just in time for dinner, we discovered that there was chicken in the oven, a mole sauce on the stove, the A/C blasting away the Chicago summer heat, and a cozy guest bedroom ready for us—one free of paper-wrapped cups or stiff, starchy sheets. And yet for all that, what really made it feel like home was their WiFi. I guess it's come to that: For me, home is where the broadband is.

About 35 million households in the United States have a broadband Internet connection—either DSL or cable—meaning that for a lot of us, the flickering computer screen is fast replacing the television as the new electronic hearth. Whether perched on the kitchen counter or the couch, whether summoning movies or keeping track of photos, money, and music, computers somehow manage to offer endless entertainment, comfort, and sustenance. George Jetson had his control panel that got the shirts ironed and the carpets vacuumed; we have our iTunes, our web grocers, and our electronic bill-pays—which seems pretty close.

But we're getting closer still. The wired house of the near future is all about integration: not only will your digital music library beam itself into the kitchen (an easy chore already), but your kitchen will just as readily beam its refrigerator's contents back to your computer so you know what needs restocking. Everything will be on the grid—lights, music, A/C, even your body itself. The trouble, of course, is that the grid has no edges. Modern architecture imagines spaces without walls, with inside and outside seamlessly flowing together. The wired house imagines the same, but with information—yours.

Bandwidth

When it comes to bandwidth, more is more. And increasingly, knowing how much bandwidth you have is becoming as important as knowing the wattage of your lightbulbs. The number itself counts, but not as much as what it brings: not only faster web surfing, but also the next step in multimedia technology. Verizon's new Fios fiber-optic service (www.verizonfios.com), which is at least five times faster than cable and is slowly becoming available across the country, makes it as feasible to download a full-length ▸

Solar Decathlon 2005

Eighteen teams of college students from the United States, Canada, and Spain will participate in the U.S. Department of Energy's Solar Decathlon, a competition to design, build, and operate the most attractive and energy-efficient solar-powered home. They'll build a "solar village" on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., and welcome the visiting public from October 7 to October 16, 2005. The competition consists of ten contests. Some evaluate the teams' abilities in architecture, home design, and communications, and other test the production of electricity and hot water from solar panels to perform all the functions of a home.

Please **visit www.solardecathlon.org** for details.

Throngs of visitors descended on the Solar Village during Solar Decathlon 2002, eager to take a peek in the homes and learn from the students.

The University of Puerto Rico team's fundamental design for 2002 is based on the use of passive solar technologies. The students believe that it's also important to achieve a very efficient spatial solution that feels comfortable and looks attractive. They wanted to design a house that goes beyond merely incorporating existing solar energy technologies—a house that can actually influence lifestyles and make an impact on the way we humans understand and relate to our space, our planet, and our sun.

PHOTOS BY WARREN GRETZ, NREL

In the future..."everything will be on the grid—lights, music, A/C, even your body itself. The trouble, of course, is that the grid has no edges."

movie at DVD quality as it is to download music. Fios will also make Internet-based telephone services (a.k.a. "Voice over Internet Protocol") like Vonage (www.vonage.com) steadier—and better sounding—than your old land line. And as Internet-enabled digital picture frames, like the CEIVA (www.ceiva.com), grow in size and shrink in price, the extra bandwidth will allow photos from far-off family to magically appear each morning on the LCD screen. Maybe it will even allow for videoconferences where the participants don't all appear to be underwater.

Home Inventory

Since the beginning of this year, Wal-Mart has required that its top suppliers put radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags—which are like bar codes but are nearly invisible—in all their shipping crates. It's a big step towards what seems inevitable: RFID tags in everything there is to buy. Once the milk, cereal, orange juice, and even the sticker on a banana has a postage-stamp sized RFID tag in it, an Internet-connected refrigerator starts to make more sense—particularly if it's hooked up to an online grocer, which would not only compose your shopping list but deliver its contents to you.

Elsewhere, Intel has been developing a system that combines RFID tags with sophisticated home sensors to track the movement of objects. Envisioned for an aging population, it could allow family members or medical professionals to monitor when a prescription pill bottle, or maybe just the prune juice, was moved during the day. Or, add RFID tags to books, magazines, and DVDs, and suddenly there's an instant inventory of your collection—the better for retailers to recommend future additions. Wal-Mart is watching.

Health

RFID tags measure what's outside your body, but a new toilet from Japanese maker TOTO measures what's inside. A built-in urine analyzer sends your very personal information to a computer and—eventually, one expects—to health-care professionals, who can recommend changes to your diet. The technology is sure to go over well with Major League Baseball.

Security

Regular home wireless networks have brought down the price of installing cameras and door sensors that are easily monitored via Internet. Motorola's (www.motorola.com) inexpensive Homesight system, for example, plugs into your computer and will send an email or text message when something is amiss back at the ranch. But the future of the technology is in ever more kinds of information: Researchers at Intel, for example, have recognized that new parents are eager for better baby monitors, ones offering high-quality video, heart-rate sensors, or temperature and humidity readings of the baby's room. But since all that is feeding into the home computer already, it might as well be saved—whether for candid naptime videos or an infographic memento of baby's first fever.

The odd thing about all this wiring (and unwiring) of the home is that every bit of bandwidth would seem to draw your attention further away from it. But then again, everything about our lives is less local than it once was. All this technology might therefore offer comfort, however strange. At times it may be convenient, at times creepy, but we can always count on it to be a fair reflection of contemporary life. ■

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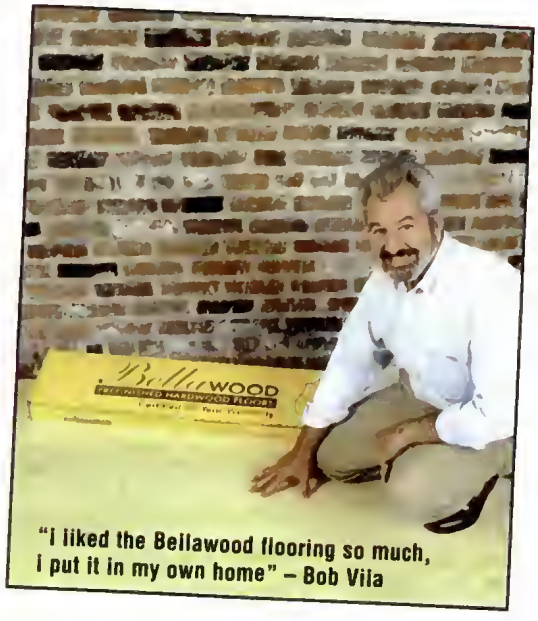

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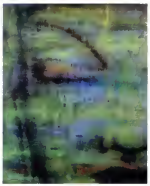

Shown: *Installation at Frank Sinatra's Estate, "Heiro 3," 36" x 50" acrylic on canvas, sculpture by Christopher Schulz*

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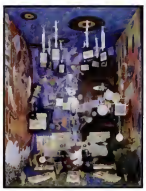

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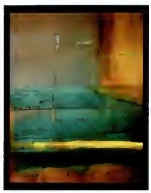

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Shown: "Abstract Kites" by Aldo Ruscito

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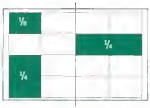

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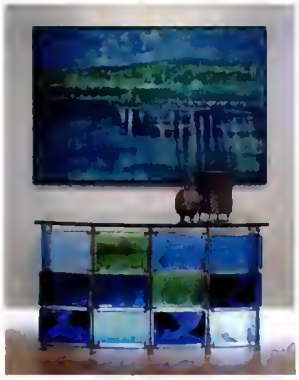

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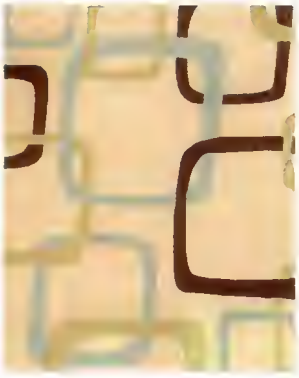

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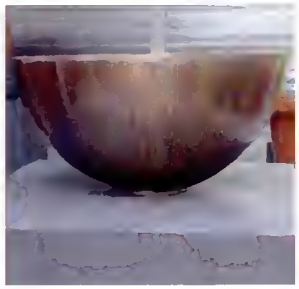

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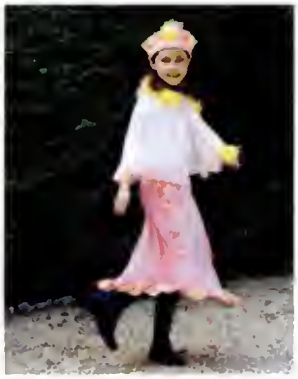

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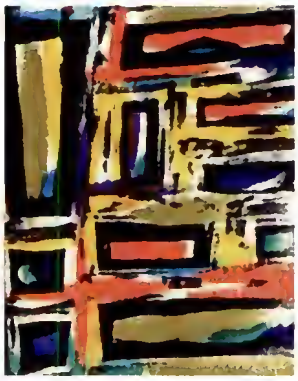

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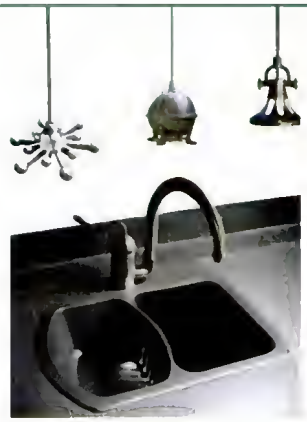

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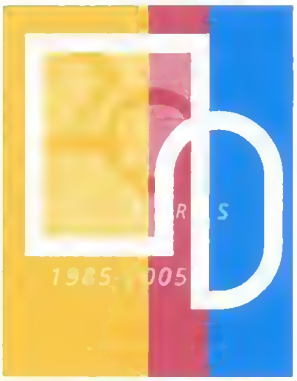

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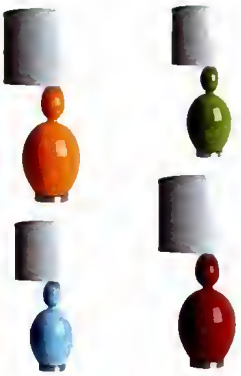

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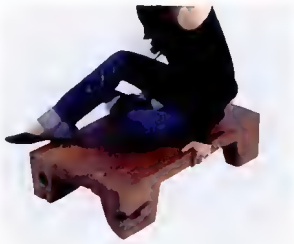

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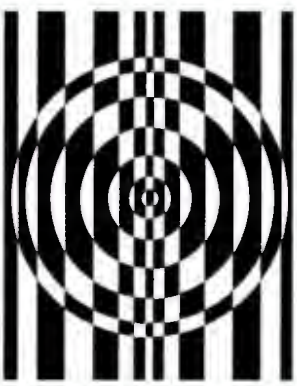

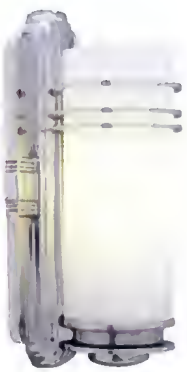

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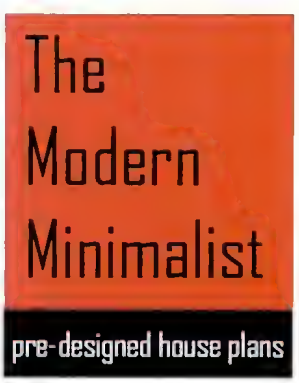

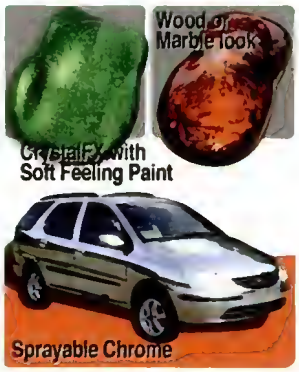

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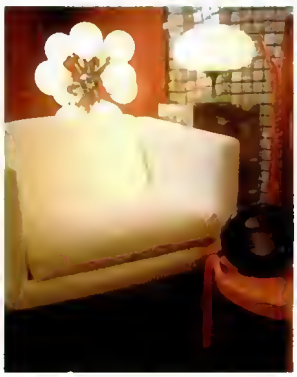

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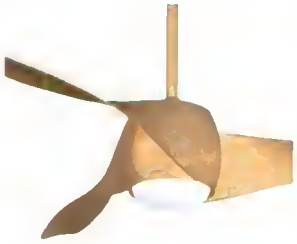

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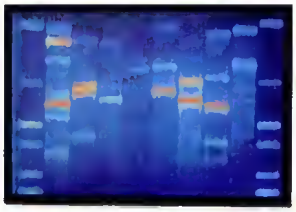

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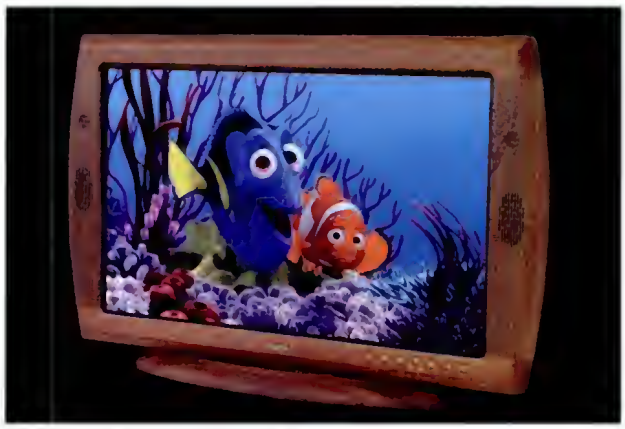

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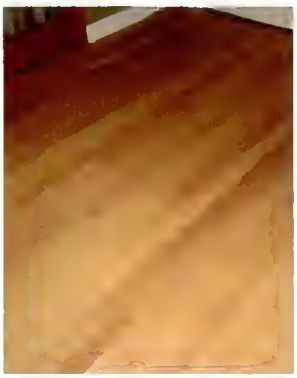

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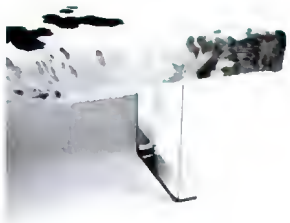

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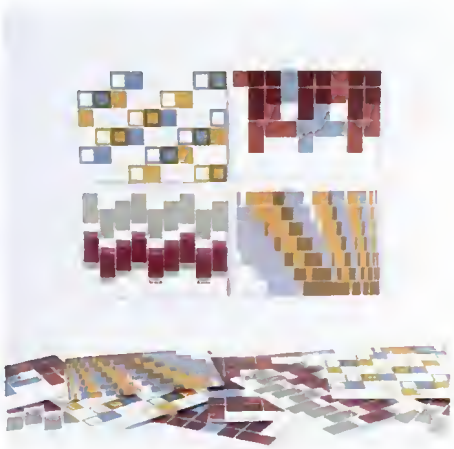

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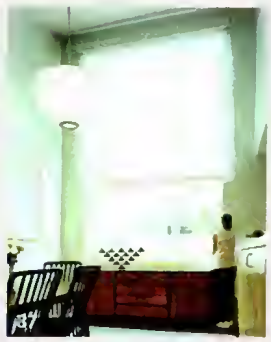

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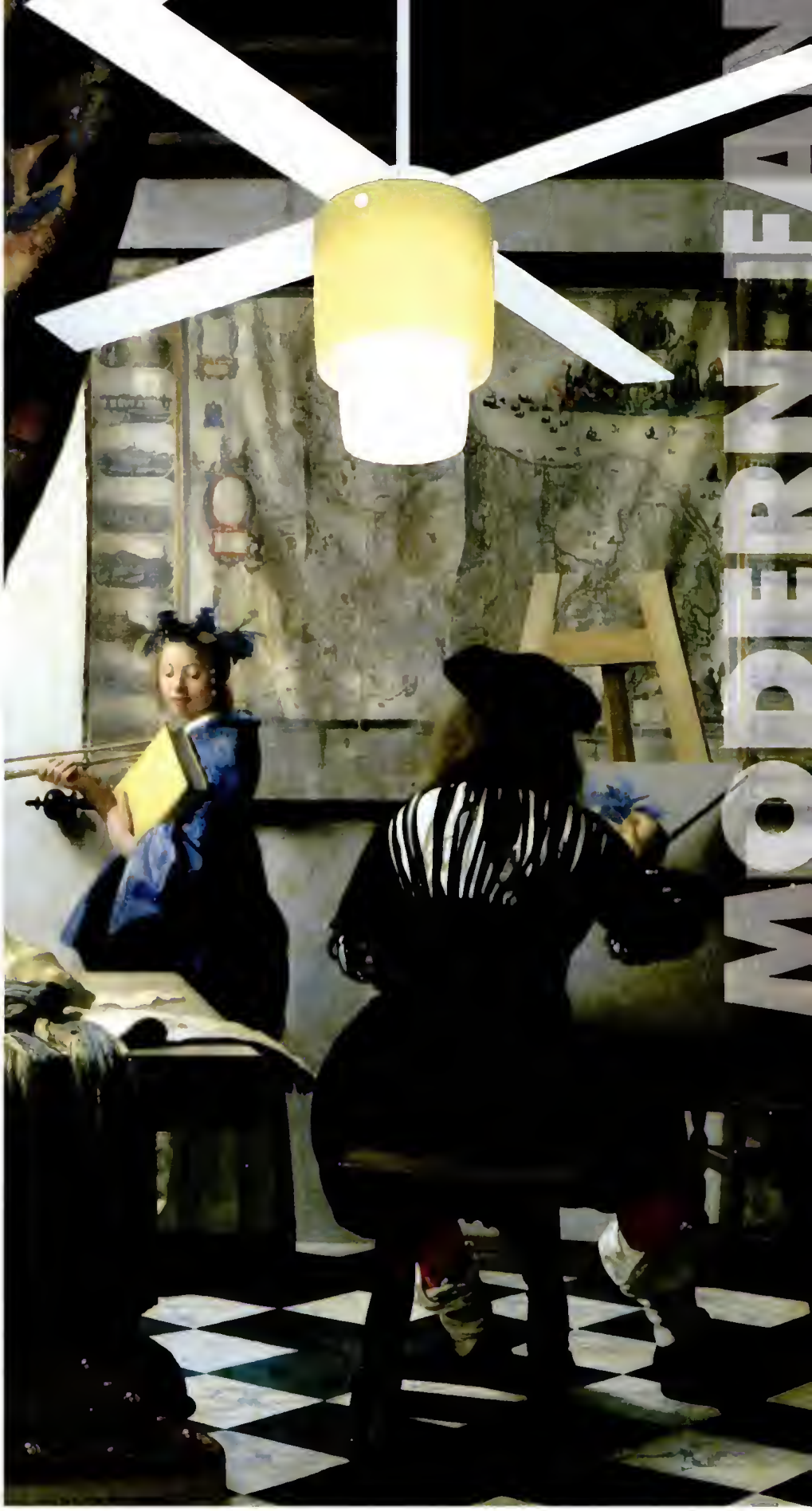

Jan Vermeer, The pointer (Vermeer's self-portrait) and his model as Klio
1665-1666 Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria

Story by Shonquis Moreno

Photo by Brian Vanden Brink

Afloat on a Fjord

The four-inch diameter columns that support this coastal retreat are almost invisible, and allow the house to appear as if it's floating among the trees.

Nature hasn't gone easy on coastal Maine. Eons ago, a vast, slow-moving glacier scored north-to-south gouges offshore to form the only fjord on the East Coast of the United States. Today, an island called Mount Desert, at 44 degrees north, remains a latitude of extremes. In the winter, residents get eight hours of daylight battered by wind, sea, and ice; in summer, they're lucky to get eight hours without light. Happily, local architect Carol A. Wilson's studio design for an actress and her screenwriter husband offers a measured response to nature's prodigality.

In order to create the 1,500-square-foot, live-in studio with forest and fjord views, Wilson pared down a larger design. "People don't realize that small can be beautiful," she says. The architect crowned the site's 50 percent grade with a long shingled box that sits on 16 four-inch-diameter support columns; less than a tenth of the building rests on the ground. This gives the house an unexpected levity, allowing Wilson to exploit the views while having a minimal impact on the site. The clients also encouraged other green efforts: Much of the wood used comes from certified forests, while structural insulated panels (SIPs) minimize heat loss through the roof.

Inside, bath and kitchen form a box within the box, surrounded by living space on the west and office on the east. Because one side of the shed roof is lower, ceilings in the living room stoop to eight feet while the office tops out at 16—an unusual juxtaposition of intimacy and space. The home's glassy workspace opens onto trees and water, and is where the couple chooses to sleep because of a bay window that cantilevers from the side of the house, 20 feet aboveground, that contains a luxe day (and night) bed. "We call it our 'bay bed,'" says the client, "and we sleep in the trees." ■

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